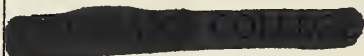




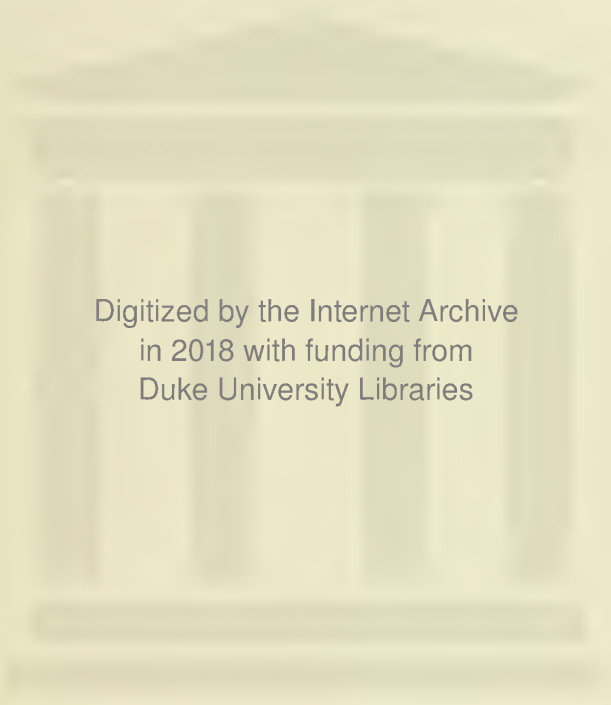
*The
Governor's
Wife*

MATHILDA MALLING

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THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE



MADAME JUNOT

The Governor's Wife

PICTURES FROM THE IMPERIAL
COURT OF FRANCE ::: 1806-1807

By
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THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE

Car mon cœur abondait en souvenirs fidèles.
Dans notre ciel sinistre et sur nos tristes jours
Ton noble esprit planait avec de nobles ailes,
Comme un aigle souvent, comme un ange toujours.

VICTOR HUGO
(à *Mme. Junot*).

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I

Junot remplit aujourd'hui la première
place auprès de moi après Berthier—
savez-vous le, Madame la Gouverneuse?
NAPOLÉON à Mme. JUNOT (1806).



MADAME JUNOT was small, slender, and lithe, and she always carried her head high. She wore her dark, chestnut-brown hair gathered in ringlets high upon her head; and over them she wore a golden band, set with three pearls. Her rich, dark complexion reminded one of an Oriental's; her eyes met yours with a sure, undaunted glance, in which there was the gleam of a true soul.

As she moved with slow assurance down the broad stairs of the castle—the beautiful Raincy, of which she was the mistress—it was evident that Madame Junot was *enceinte*.

The November day was clear and cool. The afternoon sun gilded the copper roof of the cas-

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tle, and threw a magnificent red glow over the fall-yellow poplars whose slender trunks striped the driveway with their shadows.

A cavalcade of gentlemen, in various military costumes, came galloping into the courtyard, and drew rein to pay its respects to the chief occupant of the carriage that followed at a rapid pace. Then, as if by magic, the riders filled the place, making it echo with their gay laughter and with the rattle of their spurs.

With hat in hand, and with the red glow of the sun upon his heavy, blond hair, the Governor of Paris stepped to the carriage and welcomed, to his Raincy, Princess Caroline Murat, the Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleve, the sister of the great Napoleon. In turn, she smiled condescendingly on Junot, and, lightly pressing his hand, she received the greetings of his wife, who treated her distinguished guest with all the formality dictated by court etiquette and with the graciousness of a lady.

The Princess had come to hunt at Raincy—had come, in fact, to show herself to General and Madame Junot, who had been acquaintances of earlier days, and under different conditions. She could not, however, lay aside the forced,

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sarcastic tone which had become habitual with her since she received the title of Princess, as she addressed her hostess:

“*Madame la ‘Gouverneuse’ de Paris* (as my brother, the Emperor, calls you), are you not to ride with us to-day? You, with your figure, would make an excellent Amazon.”

Madame Junot smiled conventionally as she followed the Princess up the stairs, and took no notice of the rough edge of her remark, answering :

“Your Imperial Highness will remember, perhaps, that my husband—possibly with too much care for me—has denied me the pleasure of sharing in the hunt.”

“What a tender husband you are, Junot!” said the Princess. “Here is your wife insisting that you have forbidden her to ride. Well, let Prince Joachim try that with me!”

The Governor of Paris laughed heartily, for he was in excellent humor to-day, and it amused him to hear Caroline Murat call her husband “Prince Joachim.” Never before had his proud castle seemed so beautiful, as it stood there bathed in the strong sunlight and its courtyard thronged with brilliant figures. He had a vague feeling

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that it looked like that when the Duke of Orleans hunted there, thirty years before.

"It isn't every one," he said, "who has your Highness' talent in controlling horses as well as men. For my part, I consider hunting too dangerous a sport for ladies in general."

With a challenging motion of her head toward Junot, and with a peculiar glance from under her long eyelashes, Princess Caroline said:

"Has it never occurred to you that there are women as well as men who are attracted by the danger?"

As though Madame Junot had not heard the conversation between the Princess and her husband, she turned to her Imperial Highness and asked if it was her wish to bathe before dinner. The Princess assented, and, leaning upon her former playmate's arm, she disappeared with her down the broad corridor of the castle, accompanied by the ladies in attendance.

Junot stroked his chin and smiled, and he stood for a few moments watching the retreating figures.

The white silk curtains were drawn aside from the two massive bathtubs that formed the center

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of the beautiful bathroom in the state apartment at Raincy. Nymph and Naiad looked down from the frescoed walls upon a fair scene when the Princess stepped daintily from her dressing-room, where she had been disrobed, and moved across the marble floor in the soft light of the hanging-lamp and in the yellow glow from the fire that was burning brightly on the hearth. Fairer than Venus she looked as she paused in order to drop her rose-colored shawl at the edge of the water, and then she dipped quickly in the bath. To one of the maids she said :

“Ask Madame Junot to come to me.”

“Ah, Laurette . . .”—she hesitated over her blunder, for she had long since ceased to address Madame Junot so familiarly—“I think you told me that one of your maids is very clever at hair-dressing. Will you be kind enough to lend her to me?”

“Your Highness has but to command; I shall send for Marguerite at once.”

While Madame Junot was speaking, the bather rose, the better to survey the gorgeous dinner toilet in which she had entered; for the Governor's wife was arrayed in a gown of white moiré and Flemish lace, and the diamonds

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about her head and shoulders gave a radiance to her complexion that could not be surpassed. With a smiling glance the Princess whispered :

“Listen, Laurette; do you know that a grand toilette becomes you the best while . . .”

At that instant her foot slipped, and she would have fallen had not Madame Junot, clutching her shoulder with a firm grip, supported her. But for several days afterward upon Princess Caroline's white, round shoulder there were to be seen the deep, red marks that had been made by five pointed little finger-nails.

Junot leaned back in his chair, gazing contentedly at the scene about him. The substantial hunting-dinner was nearing its end, and about him in profusion were to be seen the artistic vases and the bowls and the beautiful silver, all adorned with golden lilies—the arms of the House of Orleans; they had formed the table service at Raincy for many years. Everywhere were the brilliant flowers of autumn, and from the parent vine there fell in abundance to the table large bunches of golden-green, of red, and of purple, grapes. Host and guests offered toast after toast to a successful hunt, drinking

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freely from Bohemian glasses that were treasured souvenirs from Austerlitz.

When Junot leaned back, he let his arm rest lightly on the back of the chair to his right, in which sat Princess Caroline, Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleve. Over the wound on her left shoulder lay a lace shawl that, like an airy bandelier, veiled her breast and softly shaded her rose-red robe. From among pink and white roses her many jewels peeped out, and in her blond hair there glistened the golden tips of a diadem. Like a Venus girdle the flowers lay around her slender waist and perfumed her bosom with their fragrance. Her little hands—unusually beautiful, as were all the Bonapartes'—played thoughtfully with some dark-blue grapes, and raised them one by one to her ruby lips.

Junot watched the scene, his arm still hanging loosely over the back of the Princess' chair. From her beautiful face, flushed with wine, his glance wandered down the long row of merry guests and rested with a sense of relief upon his wife at the other end of the table. She was lifting her glass—filled, as usual, with water—to her escort, M. Montbreton, bending forward grace-

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fully as she did so. He could almost hear the finely turned repartee with which she answered that brilliant gallant, and he read a world of meaning in her clear eyes and roguish smile as she sat there in white and diamonds—his proud and beautiful wife.

“Chapelle ! Chapelle !” cried Junot, springing to his feet and beckoning to his valet, who was entering the room, though covered with dust, and with his spurs wet with blood, “is it a message from Germany ?” And when he took the precious missive in his own eager hands, he motioned almost impatiently to the messenger to withdraw.

“You have ridden with this all the way from Paris, good Chapelle ! See to it that you get wine and something to eat.”

As he spoke, Junot tore open the seal and spread the despatch before him, and a breathless silence fell upon the gay and noisy company, each one leaning forward, eager to catch the first news from the battle-field.

Junot's eyes ran quickly over the paper ; then he raised them, filled with tears, and spoke with great solemnity :

“The Grand Army has entered Berlin !”

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He stopped, looked around, and, inspired by the questions he read in all their anxious looks, he exclaimed, lifting his glass:

“Let us always remember that on the 25th of October, in the year of our Lord 1806, our Emperor planted his eagle in the city of Frederick the Great !”

With one impulse they rose, and, with uplifted glasses, they pledged their faith in the cry:

“Long live the Emperor! Long live the victory over Prussia !”

The Governor of Paris re-read the despatch, and then more leisurely he studied the contents of the letter that accompanied it. Gradually a proud smile stole over his fine features as he read his friend Duroc's brief description of the episodes of the war from the battle at Jena, on the 14th of October, to the entering of Berlin; there were only twelve days between, but each day was marked by a new victory.

Murmuring almost inaudibly, he re-read the letter until he came to the last part; then he raised his voice: “The Emperor is pleased. . . . Berthier longs for Paris. . . .” He crushed the paper in his hand, and, with an expression of bitter grief, lifted his other hand to his fore-

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head—"And I—I am not there!—I, alone, am not allowed to be with them!"

His face flushed with excitement, and his eyes filled again with tears. He turned to his wife, who had reached his side almost as soon as Chapelle, and in uncontrollable sorrow he repeated, in a toneless whisper, "I, alone, am not allowed to be with him!"

Madame Junot glanced quickly at her guests, and, pressing her husband's hand, she said to Princess Caroline:

"Madame, are you not proud to see how beloved your brother is? Never has Junot made the Emperor a greater sacrifice than when he agreed to remain here and govern his Paris for him."

The Princess, resting her hand steadily upon Madame Junot's arm, answered:

"You can rest assured that so great a devotion to our family shall have a proud reward . . .;" and for a moment the two women looked each other straight in the eyes, while a stereotyped, mask-like smile hid the thoughts of one and the crafty designs of the other.

After the dinner the company gathered in the salon, a very large room—almost a gallery—

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divided into three parts by two rows of slender marble columns, among which were placed statues holding candelabra. The part at the left was a billiard-room, that at the right a music-room, and the division between was the real reception-salon. Through an imposing row of windows was to be had a beautiful view over the park, with its extensive lawns bordered by the brook, the Pavillon Rendez-vous, and two long rows of trees.

Madame Junot sang, with Nicolo Isouard, the opera-singer, a duette from Fioravanti's "Camille." If it was intended to amuse the Princess, the effort was lost; for she sat in a window-seat chatting with Junot, who, in a sentimental posture, leaned against one of the pillars in front of her.

Princess Caroline was not very musical; she liked to talk about music, and she sang a little, because it was the fashion. To-night, she did not try to conceal the fact that she would rather talk than sing, or listen to singing. She applauded loudly, nevertheless, when the duette was finished.

"My wife has a splendid voice, has she not?" said Junot, enthusiastically.

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“A magnificent voice—truly Italian!” answered the Princess, with fervor, rising with the others to congratulate Madame Junot.

The company now surrounded the host and begged him to sing, for they knew that his voice was unusually sonorous, flexible, and full of feeling; and to-night they did not ask in vain.

“Only one song; . . . to-night I can sing but one song.” Emotional as he was, his eyes filled with tears as he began:

*“Allons enfants de la patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrivé. . . .”*

The spirit of the song was contagious. The ladies nodded their heads and softly hummed the patriotic words, while to the men—no matter of what political party—there arose pictures of war and victory.

II

Il est impossible de rien imaginer de plus joli, de plus vif, de plus aimable, de plus saillant que ne l'était cette jeune dame, vêtue avec une élégance, une fraîcheur qui cadraient si parfaitement avec tout ce que la nature avait mis de coquetterie, de luxe à la former. Elle était charmante . . .

Mém. du Général BON THIÉBAULT
(sur Mme. JUNOT).

Sur les quatre mois que je demeurai à Paris, j'en passai deux à m'étonner en voyant des gens raisonnables se laisser dominer par les hochets que la petite main de l'Empereur leur jetait au visage.

Mme. JUNOT (1806).



THE GOVERNOR OF PARIS had recently bought his beautiful residence, Raincy, from Ouvrard, who had owned it since the Revolution, but who had had neither the money nor the taste to restore it and make it worthy of its fame. Madame Junot had always loved the dignified old place, and on one occasion she had expressed in stronger terms than usual her great liking for this relic of the old régime. A few days later her husband invited

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her to hunt with him at Raincy, closing with the remark:

“Ouvrard has given me permission to kill a few deer there, and I should be glad of your company, if you can arrange to come with me.”

Madame Junot called for her hat and shawl, and in the clear September sunshine she was soon flying with him through the streets of Paris to the Strassburg road in their light cabriolet. They were alone, for the General drove. His hand often sought the little fingers that quietly rested upon the shawl, and, just as often, he bent forward to peep under the broad-brimmed hat into the clear brown eyes that were shaded by the half-drawn veil. Not many words were spoken ; but she could see, from his tender glances and by the smiles that constantly played about his mouth, that he was thinking happy thoughts: that was enough for her.

When the carriage swung into the courtyard at Raincy, Junot lifted his young wife and carried her up the stairs to the magnificent dining-room, where the lunch stood prepared on the Sèvres porcelain and silver.

Junot smilingly took the cashmere shawl from

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her shoulders, and loosened the white silk ribbons that were tied under her round chin; for as yet they had seen but one servant and the groom who took the carriage.

“*Madame la gouvernante de Paris*”—he solemnly took her hand in his and looked at her with glad eyes—“how do you think a roasted chicken and a glass of champagne would taste?”

“Let us divide the chicken, dear; you drink the champagne. Really, I think I could live on sunshine and beauty in this fairy castle!”

He led her through the whole castle, showing her the splendid salon, divided into three parts, the antique bath, and the round boudoir in the tower, the walls of which were hung with light, almost silvery, silk, and were ornamented with slender columns, alternately decked at the top with silver doves and eagles.

“But this is like a fairy tale!” exclaimed Madame Junot. “Is it an enchanted castle you have brought me to?”

He took her hand and drew her to the window; there lay the park, hundreds of years old, where the noblest game of France had grazed; there merrily rippled the brook, between flowers and through green meadows. . . .

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"Tell me, Laurette; what do you really think of Raincy?"

Madame Junot sighed. "I have told you, dear, that it is a fairy castle—a home for a prince and a dryad."

She looked up at him. His eyes were moist, though they beamed with roguish delight. He was silent for a moment, while he continued to look at her. The smile on his lips grew deeper and happier as he spread his arms to her, exclaiming:

"It is yours, all yours! Raincy is yours! I give it to you, my Queen!"

And so it was that the old castle became the home of their young happiness, of their proud plans, and of their ambitious dreams. In October they all moved to their new abode: Junot's old mother, his sister and her husband (who had always lived with them), the English governess, and the whole staff of servants.

Hers had always been an hospitable home; for the Governor's wife was fond of company, and regularly gathered many guests about her. She was, too, the lady of the court who was most famous for her dress. Her costumes were famous

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for their beauty, and especially for their coloring, which she skilfully made to harmonize with her dark complexion, dark eyes, and fine, sylph-like figure, which now, as she was just twenty-two, had the fresh roundness of the mature woman. She was unusually graceful, and in dancing—a pleasure that she greatly loved—she had the grace of a Spanish gitana. “She dances like a Bajadere dressed as a court lady,” once said the Emperor of her, at a grand ball at Hôtel de Ville.

She had a fine, strong nature, which was sturdy and not easily bent; but there was something uneven and unaccountable about her that constantly reminded one of her peculiar origin. She had, on the other hand, a power of astonishing and dazzling by a mere glance of her large eyes, a special gesture, a bend of the head, or a movement of her slender body.

Madame Junot was generally considered haughty and self-confident, a reputation not altogether unmerited; for, in spite of her politeness and her well-taught respect for social forms, she had inherited from her mother a proud, nonchalant superiority. In her veins, as in the Bonapartes', coursed royal blood. In spite of

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her aristocratic tastes and her unreflecting obedience to forms and ceremonies, she could never be quite molded into a court lady.

Her critical attitude toward others was always alert, and gave to her irony a keenness that cut all alike. The Emperor, in spite of his fault-finding, felt, in his innermost heart, a secret sympathy with this soul of fire and steel. She was flexible, and yet unchangeable, like himself; and he used to say that she was a little *imp—une petite peste*—an incorrigible.

True to her Eastern origin, she loved pomp; not the official pomp of the court—the “tricolored” style, as she sometimes jokingly called it—but the real, fantastic, tasteful, elaborate luxury which she had, as a child, learned to appreciate in her rich home, and which, later on, became a necessity of her life. Neither she nor Junot knew how to economize, for they poured out money with lavish hands; and Madame Junot’s jewels, it was said, compared favorably with those of the Empress.

She was happy and satisfied with the high position her husband occupied for the moment with Napoleon, but she considered it a natural and just reward for his services—not a special

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favor. She felt very sure that there was not another of his Generals to whom the Emperor could entrust his capital with greater safety than to Junot.

From 1800 to 1803, while Junot was Commandant of Paris, he had made himself both loved and feared at the same time. The people did not hesitate later to make it clearly understood that the dissatisfactions and troubles that arose during the Emperor's absence, and during the crisis of 1805, would not have occurred had Junot still held command in Paris. It was, therefore, quite natural that Napoleon should restore him to the same position—it was to his own interest—and give him still more power than he had had before.

Madame Junot had spent the time before the forming of the Empire and the Coronation with her husband, who was then stationed at Boulogne. On New-year's day, 1805, Junot was appointed Ambassador to Portugal, where he remained until the battle of Austerlitz. The Emperor had given him his sacred promise to call him at once, in case war should break out again; for of all the proud titles that Junot held at this time—such as, *Grand-Officier de l'Empire*,

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Colonel-Général des Hussards, Ambassadeur extraordinaire à la Cour de Lisbonne—the one which he prized the highest, and which he had held since 1793, was this: “Napoleon’s First Adjutant.”

During the early part of 1806 the Emperor had detained Junot on the Continent as Governor-General over Parma and Piacenza, while Madame Junot traveled home from Lisbon alone. The Emperor received her very cordially, spoke in the highest terms about her husband, made fun of the newly learned court habits of this twenty-year-old Ambadress—(*Voyez Joséphine, comme elle fait bien maintenant la révérence !*)—and made her at once Lady in Waiting to his mother. Madame Bonaparte herself felt a little uncertain in her new position as Imperial and Royal Princess. She found, however, in her young attendant a helpful and sympathetic friend. “Madame Junot,” she said, “is almost like my own child.”

Madame Junot did a great deal of wondering (as she wrote to her husband, who was still at Parma) during the first months after her return to Paris. For a time she was at a loss to place anything—all was so changed from the

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Paris she had known. The monarchy, with all its institutions, had sprung up in 1805 like a great power. Although she had not seen Napoleon since 1804, she commenced to see clearly the outlines of his system. The different classes which had been but slightly sketched when she left the Tuileries now stood arranged in solid ranks, well grouped around the throne; the etiquette of the court had grown quite as strong and severe as under Louis XIV. The luxury which hitherto had retained some of the lawless charm of the Directorate suddenly became official, regular, and "authorized"—like everything else. The old titles came into use again; letters were dated according to the Gregorian calendar; and, at the grand fêtes in the Marshal's hall and in the Diana gallery, you no longer amused yourself, but were amused.

Madame Junot opened her large eyes and bit her quick tongue when she met the new court ladies for the first time. Were they really the same people whom she had seen so often in the salons of Faubourg St. Germain? Had she not heard them vent their sarcasm over the restless little Corsican? Were they really the same who used to boast that they called on Madame Bonaparte,

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but never visited the General's receptions? Yes, they were the same; she knew their faces and their names; but she did not recognize their expressions.

Were the young gentlemen who now figured so neatly in the costume quadrille, led by Prince Louis and the Grand Duchess of Berg—were they really the same whom she had seen draped in togas earnestly calling each other Brutus and Torquatus? Ah, after all, Clichy did not lie so far from the Tuileries as Rome from Paris!

She never forgot the first official fête after she returned from Lisbon. It was the grand "circle," with concert and ball, which the Emperor gave at the Marshal's hall in honor of Prince Louis, whom he had recently selected to be the King of Holland. In the earlier days one conversed in the Tuileries as in any other salon in Paris; even at the grand Quintidi dinners—in which so many different elements had joined—there had at least been something like a reflection of the glad and easy spirit of *l'ancien régimes*. But now! When she took her seat that evening in the semicircle of ladies arrayed in gala costumes, with court mantles and *chérusque* of stiff-pointed gold lace—well, it was

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out of the question to expect one's neighbor to make joking remarks. The ladies sat as silently as in church during mass, while the gentlemen silently stood behind their chairs, or in rows along the walls, awaiting the arrival of their Majesties. Empress Josephine entered quietly and without ceremony, followed by her suite ; she bowed gracefully and solemnly, and took her place at the throne, while silence again spread over the hall, broken only by the rustle of silk and the noise of fans as they opened and closed.

Madame Junot could not deny that she was especially curious to see the Emperor under these different circumstances. At other times when she had met him, after a long absence, it appeared to her that he had remained the same—unchangeably the same : always in the same unpretentious uniform of the Guard that she had seen him wear since the 18th Brumaire, and he always had the same careless, sometimes good-natured, sometimes commanding and ironical, manner that she knew so well—even at the time when he was a young Lieutenant, a General, and First Consul. He was a little stouter now, but his fuller form became him well, and his skin, no longer yellow, had the dull paleness of marble.

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At last the roll of the drums was heard ; then the guards threw open the doors.

“The Emperor !” exclaimed every one, rising. Napoleon stepped quickly in, preceded by his first Palace Préfet and followed by a large suite. His walk had the same restless agility as before, and it seemed to Madame Junot that, in his impatience, he would stumble over his throne, so rapidly did he walk toward it. To-night he was in gala costume, with French dress coat and knee-breeches of white silk and gold embroidery. He carried the Legion of Honor’s large chain of diamonds, and wore a broad scarf, tied at the side. Over one shoulder hung a short purple mantle embroidered with golden bees ; inside of this, on the white silk lining, an enormous laurel-crowned *N* glittered with gold and jewels. In his hand he carried a Henry IV. hat ornamented with a diamond buckle and with immense white plumes that almost trailed on the floor. The gentlemen of his suite—she knew them all—wore similar costumes, except that they were of different color. All wore white silk stockings, and all carried hats with feathered ornaments.

Madame Junot saw the Emperor speak to young Molé and Vicomte de Laval-Montmorency, who

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had been lately elected Governor in Compiègne. She followed him with her gaze, and suddenly, over this ocean of heads, her eyes met his. These friends of childhood exchanged glances and smiled simultaneously. The Emperor turned, passed his small white hand over his chin, and addressed a few words to her Majesty's newly elected court lady, the Duchess of Luynes-Chevreuse.

III

L'homme que j'aime et que j'admire à
l'égal de Dieu — si ce n'est plus.

Le Général JUNOT

(de Bouaparte, en Égypte, an VII.).

Elle était fort élégante, ouvrait toujours
le bal avec le gouverneur de Paris, jouait
au whist avec le gouverneur de Paris,
recevait seul, de préférence à tout autre,
le gouverneur de Paris. Enfin ce pauvre
gouverneur de Paris qui n'était pas un
ange . . .

Mme. JUNOT (Mém.).



THOUGH the season of 1806-7 promised to
be unusually gay in Paris, inspirited as
it was by the many brilliant victories of
the army, it did not show any marked brilliancy
until Christmas. The Emperor and his staff
and the young officers of the Guard were natu-
rally missed, for they were still with the army
at Berlin. So Paris did not quite wake up until
the Empress had again changed her residence
from Mainz to the Tuileries.

A brilliant circle of foreign ambassadors had
been added to society. Europe had sent her most
intelligent and winning diplomats to the court of
the new Cæsar, and as this new court grew day by

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day, it could count among its members descendants of the oldest and most aristocratic names of France. Besides, there was now a young and happy *gouvernante* of Paris, who knew that she would fulfil the Emperor's wish when she did *les honneurs* for his capital as elaborately as possible.

Society soon divided itself into factions, however, as soon as it lost the Tuileries as its social center. The Queen of Naples lived quietly at Luxembourg, and neither the Princess Borghese nor the Grand Duchess of Berg—though she held court like a little sovereign in her Palace Élysée-Napoléon—had superiority enough to join the different elements and neutralize their hostilities.

In the meantime there was a great deal of dancing, not only at Faubourg St. Germain, where the Duke of Luynes received every evening until five o'clock in the morning, but also in the more exclusive court circles. And, it could not be denied, society really had a better time in this manner, each faction by itself, than in *les grandes cohues* in the Tuileries, where the Emperor experimented with his pet project: "Intermingling."

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Madame Junot could not as yet make up her mind to leave Raincy. She raised all possible objections every time a word was spoken about moving to Paris, although the palace at Champs-Élysées stood ready to receive them all. Every one else had now settled down in the city for the winter, and her husband complained that he had to travel from Paris to Raincy twice a day.

Still, Madame Junot found new excuses for remaining where she was; for she knew that this home, outside of Paris, was one of her best and surest weapons against a certain lady who was doing all in her power to make General Junot accustomed to spending his time with her at the Élysée.

The intimacy that had been so noticeable of late between the Governor of Paris and Princess Caroline, the Grand Duchess of Berg—in spite of the long time they had known each other—had but lately reached the point of attracting attention. It began about the time when the Emperor left the capital; and, after that, it quickly grew, until . . . Yes, during this dull time at the court the gossips scarcely touched upon anything else.

Junot was considered one of the most dignified

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and imposing men in the army. He was now about thirty-five years old, tall and powerful, and he looked the splendid rider and undaunted soldier that he was. His hair was dark-blond, heavy, and curly. From his temple, across his cheek, there stretched a long, broad sabre-scar, that emphasized still more the stern expression of his handsome face. His large, beautifully formed eyes were dark-blue, with an intent, sometimes fanatic, glance, which was often so peculiarly sharp and keen that one shrank from meeting it. His mouth was large and expressive. Beardless (as was the fashion), his face had a touch of melancholic energy that sometimes bordered on hardness. To no one was a smile more becoming, and he often added that charm to his winning ways.

General Junot had the unusual faculty of readily putting himself in mental sympathy with others, and of communicating his delight, sorrow, or indignation to those about him. It was this quality that made him such an invaluable leader when it became necessary to inflame the soldiers' courage and to rouse them to the point of facing the fire of battle. That he did not fear to lead whither he asked his men to fol-

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low was shown by the many scars that adorned his body.

He was known as an excellent comrade, open-hearted, gay, and true ; but, as a master, he was impetuous and exacting. When he first entered the army, his comrades called him "The Tempest," on account of all these different emotions and powers of his.

He had devoted himself to Napoleon with all the warmth of his soul—even during the dark years of '94-'95, when young General Bonaparte suffered so bitterly from the inactivity and obscurity to which he seemed forever doomed. Junot was Napoleon's Adjutant, and, like a brother, he tied his fate to that of his leader. He faithfully shared with his General every penny that his well-to-do parents sent him; in fact, he often left the management of his meager funds to Bonaparte, who was the more saving of the two. There were many times, though, when he rushed off with his allowance and risked large parts of it in the gambling-houses in the hope of gain.

For a long time Junot, as private secretary, wrote Bonaparte's letters, and in that capacity patiently listened by the hour to Napoleon's fantastic projects and daring plans in which he

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blindly believed. Yes, when Bonaparte was imprisoned by the Convention, Junot insisted, in his despair, that he should be imprisoned with him, and offered even to give his own life to save his friend. Long before the rest of the world suspected that there was anything unusual about this lean, autoeratie Corsican, with his sharp, hungry eyes, ruffled hair, and unbrushed shoes, Junot idolized him as a genius—a higher order of being. Bonaparte quietly accepted Junot's devotions and truly appreciated his friendship; but it was always with that touch of superiority which was natural to him, and for which no one thought of blaming him. Junot was Napoleon's confidant—"friend of his heart," as it was then called—in Paris, Italy, and Egypt, and his assistant and trusted man under the Consulate and Empire. Though Napoleon never thought highly of people, and seldom trusted any one, he never for an instant thought of doubting Junot's faithfulness.

Junot's position with Napoleon had early established an intimate and confidential relation with the Bonaparte family, and Madame Lætitia, Napoleon's mother, looked upon Junot as though he were her son. When, however, Junot fell in

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love with Pauline Bonaparte, Napoleon was not in favor of this union, simply because neither his sister nor Junot had the slightest prospects; he thought that their marriage would lead only to poverty and misery.

Junot had often seen Napoleon's youngest sister, Caroline, when she was a little girl, and later on, after his marriage to Laurette, and after Caroline had married Murat, he saw her almost daily. While Junot was Commandant of Paris, during the first three years of the Consulate, the Murats lived at Hôtel Thelusson, and, in consequence, they became very intimate with his own family. Caroline was, at this time, very much in love with her husband, and was completely absorbed in her young happiness.

Caroline danced, of course, with General Junot nearly every evening at the improvised balls at Malmaison, or at the Tuileries, and she often found more pleasure in his company than in that of the other young officers of her brother's staff; but it never dawned upon her to fall in love with Junot. In her childhood days she took it for granted that Junot belonged to her sister, "Paulette," and now that he was married to Laurette and much in love with her— No,

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she really did not think of falling in love with him—at least, at that time !

It happened immediately after Junot's return from Parma that, unaccompanied by his wife, he paid his respects to her Imperial Highness, Princess Caroline, at Élysée; for she, like many of the leading ladies of the time, received nearly every evening, and on this occasion she had many people about her. A little tired of her duties as hostess and Princess—to the latter of which she was not quite accustomed—Caroline, with a few intimate friends, had withdrawn to her boudoir, where they listened with much interest to General Junot's glowing description of an episode from the war in Mähren.

He leaned lightly against the marble mantle, and, with expressive gestures and thrilling words, told about the brave deeds of his soldiers. But Princess Caroline was not listening closely to what he said, although her eyes were fixed on him constantly. The glow from the chandelier and the tall candelabra, back of the Governor of Paris, threw a soft light over his manly form and handsome face. The light gilded his blond curls and spread a glow over his warm brown skin and the livid scar on his temple.

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How proud his mien ! How masterful the poise of his head against the fur on his hussar cloak ! How boldly his hand rested on his hip above the handle of his sword ! A knight, a Bayard ! thought the Princess.

The moment Junot had finished his anecdotes of heroism and sentiment, the Princess arose, her dark eyes aflame with animation, and, walking toward him, she grasped his hand.

“The Emperor’s sister regrets that she has no laurel wreaths to give to the bravest of his Generals,” she said, with the royal graciousness which she could so well affect. “But do you know how a French lady can reward a brave warrior ?”

Junot, at first surprised, bowed laughingly, with his hand upon his heart. “Madame,” said he, “a French soldier appreciates but one reward . . . ,” and with his words he bent his knee in knightly fashion to Caroline, who, bestowing upon him that tender smile which faintly reminded him of her brother, laid both her hands upon his shoulders and pressed her lips against his forehead—upon the scar over his left temple.

While she was leaning a little heavily upon

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him, he felt a sudden desire to take the slender, beautiful form in his arms; but he remembered at once—she was the Emperor's sister! He smiled and looked up—straight into her eyes. She blushed a little, and said, with great assurance:

“In the future you have the right to carry my colors, Mr. Governor of Paris”—she quickly tore the rose-colored rosette from her belt. “You know that I am Paris' own Princess.”

There were none present upon whom this little scene made any strong impression at the time. It was quite proper that a woman should become enthusiastic over daring deeds—and the taste of the times required “scenes.” A kiss on the forehead, moreover, meant nothing more than a hand-clasp while dancing—scarcely as much. There was not a cavalier who had not, at least in kissing games, kissed every lady of his acquaintance. For Junot there was this gain from the scene: he was thenceforth permitted to wear the Princess' “colors.”

After the Coronation the appearance of the social world changed from an antique model to a fashion decidedly chivalric, medieval, and troubadour. There was not an officer in the

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Emperor's army who did not boast of having a ribbon, or a scrap of lace at his sword-handle, or some fair lady's favor under the plume of his chapeau. The Princess already had a whole cohort of "knights"; there were several among the young men of the guard who, in sentimental confessions—which were sometimes followed by bloody duels—showed dainty rose-colored tokens of affection. These they had received from the same gracious hand at one or another tender moment.

But Junot had felt the Princess' warm lips tremble against his forehead, though he suspected that her warmth was not on account of his bravery, of which he had not boasted during his recital. Her Imperial Highness had shown him a great honor. He smiled to himself as he walked down the stairs of Élysée late that night—he was used to such easy conquests—and, when he reached home, he told the whole story to his wife without special thought or comment.

Madame Junot, on the other hand, did not take the episode so lightly. The kiss—that did not trouble her; but she knit her fine eyebrows a little as she said: "There has been a great deal of talk about Caroline this winter, I hear. If

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no one holds her back, she will be as flighty as Paulette."

Junot remarked, with a gay laugh :

"That would be good enough for Murat ! You know how little he troubles himself !"

Madame Junot, who usually appreciated a piquant story at its passing value, interrupted him in a short, brusque manner with the unexpected comment :

"I am not at all interested in the conquests of her Highness."

Toward the end of a dull, gray day in November, in the twilight of the music-room at Raincy, sat Madame Junot singing a little Spanish folk-song, the few verses of which she dreamily repeated again and again as her hands passed softly over the keys. It was a melancholy, monotonous melody that faintly died away in the echoing room.

Outside, the fine rain was loosening the dried and withered leaves from the trees, and the mist seemed as gray as the faint daylight that fell dimly among the curtains. No fire burned on the hearth. Everything was sad and dark around this fair young woman, whose brilliant

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Oriental costume shone in peculiar contrast to this November day.

Madame Junot rose from the piano, still humming, and turned to the window, tapping impatiently on the pane. Her husband had come home earlier than usual, and she was waiting to speak with him before dinner, for he was to return to Paris immediately after the meal. Why was he so long in coming? Hadn't he told her some time since that he would be down in a few minutes?

She suddenly drew a bracelet from her pocket and examined it closely in the gray light. It was much too large for her own arm; the ornamentation was artistically braided blond hair, set in gold filigree. She would like to know where he got it!

She hid it quickly when she heard Junot's steps as he walked quickly through the large salon to his wife, whom he embraced and tenderly kissed.

"Why did you not stay up-stairs to chat a little with me? . . . I never see you nowadays—and, besides, I had a lot of gay stories for you to-day."

Madame Junot smiled coldly, while she withdrew herself a little impatiently from his arms.

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Without noticing her bad humor, he commenced—in an unrestrained manner, laughing like a frisky boy—to tell her the news from the city. He had an especially large fund of gossip about Madame de Talleyrand, who was, at the present, the terror and *bête noire* of the court, and upon whom he had called the day before.

Laurette listened silently; but as she heard his clear, happy voice, his sarcastic, flippant words, she was wrought to a nervous pitch of uncontrollable anger. Turning suddenly upon him, she took the bracelet from her pocket.

“Is this yours?” she asked, quickly, as she held it before him.

The Governor of Paris flushed. He knit his brow, but did not look up at his wife.

“Be sure to take it!” she said, angrily, throwing it upon the table. “I am sure that it is not for my sake that her Highness has sacrificed her tresses!”

He did not speak, but took her forcibly by the wrists. She fearlessly looked him straight in the eyes, although he held her so tightly that it pained her.

“Ah, you think that I do not know Caroline Bonaparte? Remember that she has been my

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best friend !” She emphasized her words ironically. “But if you imagine that it is on account of your handsome eyes that she makes a fool of herself, you are very much mistaken.”

“What in the world do you mean by this folly, Laurette?” Junot pushed her scornfully away from him and spoke with great dignity. “I do not understand a word of all this.”

“No, that is just what I say—you do not understand. But I understand; she never deceives me.” Madame Junot gazed angrily at him with her large eyes from the other side of the table, where she stood with her arms folded—as was her habit when angry.

“Have you fully considered that you are now the Governor of Paris? That you have greater authority than any of the other Governors—yes, even more than the Duke of Brissac had? You are chief of a garrison which numbers 80,000 men; you rule over Paris, the most important point in the empire; you are the Emperor’s friend, his First Adjutant, who, whenever you like—be it day or night—has a right to go in and out of his tent. Have you really thought what a powerful man you are, Junot?”

“I do not see what all this has to do with the

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bracelet—which you have . . .” He did not finish the words that were upon his lips.

“I honestly found it upon the floor of my own bedroom,” she said, coldly; “and as no one comes there but you—then . . .”

Junot mumbled something about the infernal darkness and rang for a light. Two lackies entered with a couple of tall silver lamps and placed them on either side of the clock, while the Governor of Paris impatiently paced the floor.

“Have you finished, Laurette?” He stopped and looked at the clock. “There is no reason for letting the dinner get cold.”

“I have finished,” she answered, with dignity; “for it is difficult to continue when one does not receive an answer.”

“An answer?” he questioned. “Why should I try to answer such nonsense? You evidently think that all women are as great adepts at scheming as you. Princess Caroline has done us the honor to give us her friendship—yes, friendship” (he said the words threateningly), “and this, which you seem to appreciate so little, I thankfully receive.”

“Remember, then, that I have warned you!” she said.

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“Warned! Dear Laurette, haven’t I been in greater dangers than this?” He almost laughed with scorn in his anger and vexation.

“Ah! it is not the Princess’ yellow hair and white arms against which I warn you—I know that they would not move you in the least. Beware of her plans! They are directly opposed to Napoleon’s; they mean mischief!”

“Again!” he exclaimed, sarcastically. The clock on the mantel struck six. The Governor’s wife proudly passed her husband, who silently offered her his hand to escort her to the table; she took it without speaking, and thus, hand in hand, they silently passed the servants, who ceremoniously opened the doors before them.

At coffee, in the little salon, the Governor of Paris remarked, with some distinctness, that he had promised to spend the evening at the Élysée. No one objected to this—not even when he added the statement that, in all probability, he would not be home during the next day.

That night Madame Junot found the bracelet still on the table in the music-room. She put it aside—among her own jewelry—and it was never claimed.

IV

Vous devez vous soumettre (disait-il à Joséphine) à toutes mes fantaisies et trouver tout simple que je me donne de pareilles distractions . . . J'ai le droit de répondre à toutes vos plaintes par un éternel moi.

Mém. de Mme. de RÉMUSAT.

L'Empereur se disait convaincu qu'il avait été ce qu'elle (Joséphine) aimait le mieux. Et il ajoutait en riant, qu'il ne doutait pas qu'elle n'eût quitté un rendez-vous d'amour pour venir auprès de lui.

Mémorial de Ste HÉLÈNE.



EMPERESS JOSEPHINE had just finished with her *friseur*; and, wrapped in a richly trimmed tea-gown, she was seated at ease in the middle of the room, while there were exhibited before her many dresses, shawls, and hats from which to choose her costume for the day. The hats rested in upholstered baskets that were especially made for the purpose, the dresses on forms that showed their style and materials to advantage.

Beside the Empress stood her *dame d'atours*, her niece, the Countess de la Valette; but

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Josephine consulted no one in making her selections, for she now devoted her chief attention to dress—an occupation that consumed the greater part of each day. Her early toilet was made behind carefully closed doors, and consisted of an elaborate and artistic application of all the cosmetics of the day—many of them prepared with much mystery for her particular and special use.

The Empress had become, from year to year, more exacting in her luxuries, until she was now at the point where she changed her linen three times a day; wore a pair of silk stockings but once; and even her elaborate gowns seldom more than once. Owing to the fact that she never gave away any of her wearing-apparel, she had great storerooms full of beautiful dresses, and she possessed a collection of laces, shawls, and jewelry which would compare well with that of any Oriental ruler.

On this particular morning, late in February, 1807, the Empress received her friends informally in her private room, in the midst of such a wealth of display of things feminine that the greatest animation pervaded the group of callers. Josephine was never happier than when she had

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put formality aside and was plain Madame Bonaparte in her most intimate circle; and now that the Emperor was away, she relieved her visitors from the restraint of court etiquette.

Among her friends she received no one with more cordiality than Madame Junot, whose recent arrival with her household at the Champs-Élysées placed her once more in contact with her old acquaintance, to whom she was just now a more interesting personage than usual. Josephine embraced Laurette, and inquired with genuine interest about her children—especially about her goddaughter, Josephine, who was a great favorite with the Empress.

She then asked Madame Junot's opinion regarding the peacock-blue jacket which was proposed to go with a rose-colored costume; for the fashion that season was, more than ever, Oriental: short, open silk jackets in strong colors, hanging over richly embroidered skirts of airy materials, with muslin turbans for the head. Madame Junot, who was noted for her good taste, considered the weighty question, and advised her with much interest and pleasure.

At last, her Majesty had made her choice and was ready to join the ladies of the court who

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were gathered in the dressing-room. Standing in groups, laughing and chatting, they had, after their greetings to the Empress, spread around the large room. The Marshals' wives told news from headquarters, at Warsaw, and, as they glanced at Josephine, they indulged in much laughing by-play and stage whispers.

The Empress sent her ladies away after a while, but begged Madame Junot to remain—pretending that she wished to show her some magnificent new shawls which she had recently bought. She let Mademoiselle Avrillon walk ahead of them into the large wardrobe, where her Majesty often spent hours in conference with her milliners and tailors, and where she was always sure of being undisturbed.

Laurette felt at once that there was something that troubled the Empress, who seemed absent-minded and somewhat artificial in her manner, though she had been friendly and gracious, as usual. And Laurette had observed also that she had been rather cool toward one of the ladies of Princess Caroline's court. Madame Junot could not understand why Josephine should choose her as a confidant, as they had never been very intimate; but it was clear that

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she longed to lighten her heart of some anxiety or other.

After the Empress had indifferently let her admire the shawls, she gave Mademoiselle Avril-lon to understand, by an impatient movement of her hand, that she should remove them. When they were alone she drew Madame Junot to a seat beside her on the little settee, which was arranged quite cozily between the richly draped window and one of the colossal cabinets of the room. She then commenced, a little forced, as she laid her hand upon Laurette's shoulder:

"I know, dear Madame Junot, that I can trust you . . . that you can judge an affair with tact, and" (she looked up), "and, if necessary, keep it a secret."

Laurette bent forward and laid her hand upon her heart. "Your Majesty, it is not necessary for me to assure you that . . ."

"Yes, I know that, I know that," interrupted the Empress, in the impetuous manner peculiar to her when she was angry.

Then she added, abruptly: "Do you visit much with Madame Murat? Has she not told you the great news?"

Madame Junot was abashed at her directness,

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and dropped her eyes before the restless, searching glance of the Empress, though she managed to say, with some show of curiosity:

“What news, your Majesty? I do not understand . . .”

“Oh, you know it; I can see that you know it!” said Josephine, covering her face with her hands. Then bending forward, she whispered, “Bonaparte has a son!”

The Empress was not mistaken. Madame Junot knew all about this very peculiar story, for Caroline had triumphantly told it to her some time before, under promise of secrecy; she always told everything to the right and left—under promise of silence, to be sure that it would be known.

“The Emperor,” Princess Caroline had said—“yes, there is no doubt about it—the Emperor has an heir. An old schoolmate of mine from Madame Campan’s school; you must have known her—Eléonore Dénuelle, the buxom brunette. Well, the Emperor became greatly infatuated with her soon after his return from Germany. I confess,” continued Caroline, “that I followed this story with a certain interest—partly because Bonaparte really seemed to care for her, and

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partly because she had confided in me from the first, and I felt it my duty to protect her. You know, Laurette, at my house"—this was a reflection upon the court of Princess Borghese—"things seldom happen. My brother was much interested in her condition, and his last words to me were to let him know at once should it be a boy. You can understand how delighted he must be to have an heir at last."

In this offhand manner Princess Caroline had related the story, and she gave the impression that she did not think much of the matter; but Laurette read from her glances how highly she valued its importance, and she could now see that the Empress drew the same conclusion: that at the birth of this child, Josephine was threatened with the divorce which she had ceased to fear after the coronation of Napoleon and herself, and their union with the Church; but the dreaded possibility now loomed again as though it were inevitable. Josephine knew her husband; she knew that after this he would have but one thought: to have a legitimate heir.

With bent head, and without any effort to conceal her grief, the Empress continued her sad story, much to Madame Junot's distress.

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“Caroline Murat started this whole intrigue,” sobbed poor Josephine; “I have it from a reliable source. It was she who found her, and, so to speak, exhibited her charms to Bonaparte. As for him, this is merely a fleeting caprice; for there is nothing in this world which he fears so much as a woman’s power over him. At present he considers his love affairs as mere matters of fancy—as diversions after his work, and nothing else. That is why I have permitted them so long. Ah, yes, Madame Junot”—she carefully put her handkerchief to her eyes—“what must we women not suffer!”

Laurette winced at the suggestion of these words, and straightened herself involuntarily. How she wished that she might end the conversation! How hot and close the room seemed!

The Empress noticed Madame Junot’s agitation, and, looking over her handkerchief at her, forgot her own sorrow for a moment.

“You know, Madame Junot, I have always been your friend—and Junot’s, too, though he would never believe it—and I wish to warn you against Madame Murat!”

Laurette was silent, playing nervously with the lace trimming of her dress, pained to think

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that a stranger should have reason to speak to her in this manner—and to pity her.

The Empress peeped cautiously at her with dry eyes. “And now, my dear friend, I should like to ask . . . Do you know whether the Princess has already sent a courier to Napoleon? . . .”

“Yes,” answered Madame Junot.

“Oh, God!” grieved Josephine, wringing her hands. “And just now—when I felt so secure, and happy that Eugene had such a grand position; and I had thought that Hortense’s boys would be to Bonaparte all that his own might have been to him. I know what an impression this will make upon him! I know him! He has put a crown upon his own head; he wishes this to be inherited by his own flesh and blood.”

Madame Junot tried, as best she could, to comfort the Empress; she herself was almost exhausted after this scene, and only wished to get away. At last Josephine arose.

“Will you do me a favor, Madame Junot?” said the Empress, taking her by the hand as she rose. “I cannot ask any of my ladies about this child, for the Princess trusts none of them, nor

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has she friendship for any of them; but you—for you she will do anything at present.” Laurette again felt the blush of bitter humiliation upon her forehead. “The boy has been given to Achilles’ nurse, Madame Loir,” continued the Empress. “Will you not try to see him? . . .” She stopped to think a moment. “And tell me—please give me a detailed description of his looks—tell me whether he resembles his father.”

Laurette was deeply moved with sympathy for this wife who was alone in her solitary grandeur. She kissed the Empress’ hand and said, “I shall do all that your Majesty wishes.”

With a very thoughtful face, and with the artificial, diplomatic air which his wife knew so well, Junot came home one forenoon from the Tuileries, where he had breakfasted with the Empress. In his handsome, open face, that she had learned to read as a book, she could see, when he knit his brow and pressed his lips together, that he was pondering some state secret which would not remain long secret from her.

When he entered her room a little before din-

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ner, she put aside her favorite volume for the question she knew would be broached.

"Well?" she said, inquiringly.

"Well," he began, hesitatingly, pulling at his vest and backing against the mantel, as though for support, "can you guess why she wished to see me?"

Madame Junot shook her head.

"She is anxious to secure my support for Eugene, if . . . Yes, you understand; if the Emperor . . . God forbid it!"

"Has she, too, stooped to schemes and intrigues?" exclaimed Madame Junot, ironically.

"One might easily believe that all these silly dames had learned their lesson in the same school, they agree so well in their desires and methods."

Junot did not seem to hear her, pushing, as he did absent-mindedly, at a log on the hearth.

"What did she say?"

"Oh, she managed her approach very adroitly. She began by flattering me, and spoke how Napoleon had always displayed exceptional friendship for me, etc., etc.; and she complained because he could not have his true friends about him in times of danger; and that

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he risked his life in every battle, like the commonest soldiers ; and . . .”

“Well, she reached, then, the—”

“Yes, then came the question that she had at heart. She asked me if I believed that the France he had created would ever fall back again into the anarchy of the Directorate. Besides, did I think there was any one strong enough to inherit it.”

“And you answered?” asked Madame Junot, breathlessly, as she raised herself on her elbow.

“I told her, as a matter of course, that this calamity was warded off by the Emperor and the Senate; that the King of Naples, Prince Louis, and his sons—yes, even Jerome—fully secured the succession. On the other hand, she didn’t believe that the army would tolerate any such arrangement, and thought that a guardian ruling for the little Napoleon was quite impossible under the present condition. She thought that perhaps Prince Eugene, who is so well liked by the army, and so popular in both France and Italy . . . But you readily understand what she wanted.”

Laurette for a moment played idly with the fringe of her dress.

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“Yes, I understand. . . . And Murat?” she asked, suddenly opening her eyes and flashing them straight at her husband. “What does the future hold for Murat and the Princess Caroline?”

V

"O, la drôle de tête!"

Mme. JUNOT de la Princess Pauline.



AS A surprise to Madame Junot upon her return from Raincy, her husband had had her chamber redecorated and furnished in the grand style of the Empire—mahogany, with bronze ornaments; and the heavy draperies at the windows and around the bed were dark green. But the effect was too heavy and somber—Junot himself admitted that the room looked more like a tomb of a king than the shrine of his love. Every piece of the furnishings, however, had been designed by a Percier or a Fontaine, and had won for its style and elegance the praise of all who had seen the room.

Laurette's little head still nestled quietly on the big lace pillow, though it had long been day. Her cheek rested lightly on her folded hands, while she gazed dreamily at the door.

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The curtains were still drawn, and upon a black marble column, above the steps leading to the bed, there still burned dimly an antique *veil-leuse*.

Suddenly there was a stir, and the noise of many voices in the salon next the chamber. Laurette listened for an instant, and then she rang vigorously. But at the same instant the folding doors were thrown open, and almost before the valet had time to announce "*Son Altesse Imperial et Royale, Madame la Duchesse de Guastalla*," Pauline Borghese hurried into the room with her peculiar, irregular walk.

"Lie still, little Laurette!" cried her Imperial Highness, climbing on the great bed without much regard to her dignity. "You see, I have something of great importance to tell you," she continued, as she settled herself comfortably against the foot-board. But she began with a complaint of her own: "Why don't you ever come to see me, Laurette? Nor Junot, either? He has evidently forgotten how pretty I was in Italy. I am just as pretty now—even prettier," and she surveyed with satisfaction her reflection in a mirror that was opposite; "but he never looks—except at Caroline! al-

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ways at Caroline! Yes, yes, Laurette, you too may regret some day that you have always preferred Caroline to me . . .”

“But your Highness has something of great importance to tell me,” interposed Madame Junot, trying, with a grimace, to draw up a foot which Princess Pauline was almost crushing beneath her.

“Yes, I have news for you. But first, pray tell me why you have never invited me to any of your entertainments at Raincy? But only Caroline! always Caroline! . . . I’ll give you just one word of warning, Laurette”—here she bent forward and spoke with the utmost clearness—“Caroline hasn’t the least idea of tact or discretion.”

Though Madame Junot felt keenly the suggestion hidden in these words, she could not help laughing to hear the Princess speak of “tact and discretion.”

“But, your Highness,” she said, in a consoling voice, “hunting is the only pleasure we have to offer our guests at Raincy. You do not ride, and you dislike to be driven about in a calash : . . .”

“I could be carried around in a palanquin

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. . .” proudly suggested the Princess ; and then, as they pictured such a scene, both ladies laughed gaily.

“What have you done with your husband this morning, little Laurette ? I thought you always shared the same room—you certainly did when you lived in Rue de Verneuil. Where is Junot ? I suppose he will come to bid me good-morning, for I am one of his oldest friends. You can’t imagine how deeply he was in love with me when we were at Marseilles, and later too, especially in Italy.”

Madame Junot, ringing, inquired for “Monseigneur.”

He had gone out.

“That looks as though he is in the habit of paying early visits,” said the Princess, opening her eyes and assuming a severe expression.

“Really, Laurette, you should not permit such a state of affairs.”

“Is there nothing I can do for you, madame ?” answered Madame Junot, sharply, in order to cover her distress and the tears that already threatened to fall.

“Why, how stupid you look ! You know as well as I what great influence he has at the Ély-

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sée; and, of course, he has been called to confer with Caroline about our comedy. Haven't you heard that we shall give a comedy, as well as 'The Barber of Seville,' on St. Joseph's day, the 19th of March? The comedy is especially in honor of the Empress, and you must take part in it, too. Why, of course you must take part, Laurette!"

"But, madame, you forget my condition."

"Your condition! Well, I'll see to it that Caroline selects a part for you in which your condition will not show. She is to be the heroine, *Caroline*, and Junot has been cast for the part of the hero, whose name, by the way, is *Charles*. The story is something about the Emperor's victories—about Jena and Eylau. It will be something grand!"

"But I am to be *Rosina* in 'The Barber of Seville,' which will be given first that evening. Don't you think that my costume will be becoming to me? I am to have a rose-colored hat with large black feathers, and a short skirt of rose silk, and a black lace apron. Oh, I shall look much prettier than the pale Hortense did, when she played that part at Malmaison four or five years ago! You recall that night, don't

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you, with Bourrienne and Savary? But what am I thinking of?"

Princess Pauline started up and pulled all three of the bell-cords that hung against the wall.

"You haven't yet seen my new Chamberlain, Laurette!"

To the lackey and two maids who rushed in at this moment she called:

"Show in the gentleman who is waiting in the salon!"

The lackey again threw open the door, and in his most solemn tone announced:

"Monsieur de Forbin."

As though he were shot out of a cannon, M. de Forbin came into the room, bowing very seriously to the two ladies on the bed. Princess Pauline smiled, and, with a gracious movement of the hand, she turned to Madame Junot.

"There he is, Laurette," she said, in a voice intended to pass for a whisper. "What do you think of him, little friend?"

The Princess' new Chamberlain heard what she said as well as Madame Junot. He was really a handsome fellow—tall, graceful, and elegant. It suddenly occurred to him that he

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had been called simply to be exhibited as an example of Princess Pauline's good taste. He blushed to the roots of his hair and remained standing in the same position, with his head a little bent.

Pauline Bonaparte surveyed the handsome fellow closely, smiled graciously, and, beckoning to him, said:

"Monsieur de Forbin, will you be so kind as to help me down from here? Yes, so—thanks!"

She leaned heavily upon his arm, and bent down once more over Madame Junot. "Well, my pigeon, I shall see you again at the first rehearsal at the *Élysée*." She kissed Laurette, and whispered again—this time in Italian: "Look at him! Such a back!—such a carriage!—such a pair of legs . . . ! What do you think, little Laurette?"

When Junot came home the day of Princess Pauline's call, he discovered his wife in her room busy arranging some flowers in a tall alabaster vase that adorned the mantel. As he drew near her, he failed to win any welcoming glance from her, and for a time had to content himself with watching her at her task.

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"Your old friend Pauline, the Princess Borghese, left her regards for you this morning," she began, at length.

"Yes?—thanks! I am glad they are not from Prince Borghese"—his voice sounded forced and unnatural, and he fixed his gaze sharply upon Laurette's profile.

She shook her head indifferently. "Prince Borghese! Why should you think of him now? Oh, no; he is a sensible fellow, and will wait a few months before he continues his advances. We shall then see what they lead to, when the fort is no longer *enceinte*."

"What sort of language is this! Must I listen to this from you too, Laurette?" he asked, sharply, knitting his brow.

"It is the language that my high-born friends, their Imperial Highnesses, Princess Borghese and the Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleve, teach me," she answered, in a nonchalant manner, holding one of the rose stems in her teeth. "Besides, since you are the only one who hears these tales of mine, I surely might be allowed to boast a little when I have a royal admirer."

"I don't catch your meaning."

"I don't mean anything, my dear. I have

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just told you that my admirer has, for the present, . . . I should say, rather, I have no chance with him. Meantime I have nothing else to do but to put on my best visiting costume and drive to the Élysée, where I have been ordered by Princess Caroline—probably to hear a lecture about how I should behave !”

Junot sat down near the window and drummed nervously on the table.

“Listen, Laurette”—he clutched her arm as she passed him—“what has Princess Pauline said to anger you so? Now . . .” He firmly held her by her elbows with both hands, and looked searchingly into her eyes.

Laurette laughed—with a clear, taunting laugh. “Nothing! Why should you think that she would say anything to excite me? She is good nature and amiability personified. She was so charming that she even compelled me to take part in a comedy which Caroline and you are arranging. She seemed a little surprised that I did not know anything about it, and came to the conclusion that it was probably to save me that you had kept it so quiet.”

Junot dropped his wife's arm. “Certainly !” he said, brusquely.

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"And I thank you for your consideration," continued Madame Junot, quietly. "It would not be pleasant for me to appear just now side by side with Princess Caroline; but it looks as though her Highness wishes to place me at that disadvantage, because she has sent me a summons that sounds very much like a command."

Madame Junot had now entirely forgotten her assumed satirical coldness, and was becoming very angry.

"I will not be the setting for a tableau that shall glorify the touching love of *Charles* and *Caroline*," she said, suddenly, full of wrath.

Junot was quite as angry as she, as he paced the floor with rapid steps.

"It appears that you think it is I who will force you to take part in this comedy! I can assure you of the opposite, as I have done all . . ."

"You need not assure me of your objection. I can readily understand why you wished to be rid of me at the rehearsals," she coldly interrupted.

Junot turned and looked sternly at her as she stood by the window, her back to the light,

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with one hand resting on the marble table. She stood there—so small and delicate, with her heavy burden—and he could see that she nervously tried to keep from breaking down and bursting into tears at his glances. He stepped quickly up to her, took her tenderly around her shoulders, and gently laid her head upon his breast.

“My poor Laura,” he said, quietly, “you—you don’t know how you pain me. . . .”

She sobbed deeply and convulsively for a short time. Than she controlled herself, lifted her head, and looked up at him with her large brown eyes, that so honestly reflected every thought of her soul.

“Come,” she said, “let us speak frankly with each other. This state of affairs is unbearable and—and—unworthy . . .”

Together they sat down upon a sofa that was placed under a mirror, his arm still resting lightly about her shoulders.

“I do not ask you to be sincere,” she continued in a low tone, as she dried her eyes. “I know it isn’t the fashion—that it isn’t knightly to be sincere—that it isn’t good form. And I expect to live up to the demands of the

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times. I realize that a man must keep silent while he plays the part of cavalier to a lady, even though there is a knife at his throat. I would not have you, for my sake. . . . No, do not speak! It isn't necessary—I have good eyes. You know that I have suffered much—but the women of my set must suffer. And though it has been harder for me than for some of the rest, I have been able to endure it. I am your wife; and in the depths of my heart I know that, though I have a hundred rivals, your love for me is honest and noble. Just because I am your wife, I do not envy any of my rivals."

She raised her eyes and looked up at him almost archly. "Yet," she said, "I am the only woman in the world whose life you would take with your own hand. If I were unfaithful to you—if you found me in the arms of another,—you would kill me, although you would treat lightly the unfaithfulness of a lady-love for whose 'honor' you would give your life. But just because I am your wife, I do not envy any of my rivals."

He did not answer, but he bent down and tenderly kissed the little hand which rested lightly on his arm.

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"So long as it concerned only my own happiness," she continued, "I have not complained; I know that in war a man seldom remains true—yes, you cannot say that I have taken this too sentimentally. I have not bothered you with petty jealousies."

"It has not often been necessary, Laurette," said he, smilingly. "Taking it altogether, you have held me so securely that there have been times that I did not even care to look at other women. Who was like you? Who could enchant and love like you? . . ."

A faint smile flitted over Madame Junot's face, and she lifted her handkerchief to her lips to conceal it. He saw this, however, and, jubilantly happy over this sign of forgiveness, he tore the lace handkerchief from her hand and lovingly kissed the sweet, telltale lips.

"Laurette, my own, you must not be harsh with me. You know yourself that it is only you—you alone—who means anything to me! Without you life would be nothing!"

"I know it," she said, seriously, "but . . ."

"No 'but!'" he exclaimed, joyously. "Now you have given me a little bit of pardon, I can begin to live again and to hope."

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She laid her hand over his mouth and looked sternly at him.

"I have not forgiven you—I can never forgive you. But, as I told you, the question does not concern me. Do you really not see that this is a serious matter that concerns you personally and officially?"

"What! are you coming back to the same old story?" said he, with a shade of disappointment in his tone.

"Unfortunately, more people than I have this idea. Think of the consequences, if the Emperor should learn of this intrigue, or even suspect it!" And she looked anxiously into his eyes.

"Oh, he knows very well what sort of a woman his sister is—none better!" exclaimed Junot, reassuringly.

"You may rest certain that he doesn't know the important affairs she is rashly meddling with; and if he did, he would see to it that no one else should know about them and her connection with them."

"Don't believe for a moment that the Emperor is the only one in Paris who does not understand his sister Caroline. For, of course," he continued, in the lofty tone of one whose

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position with the Emperor was secure, "any suspicion would be about her alone—in this case."

"Of course!" answered Madame Junot, matching his certainty by her own growing faith. Then, rising, she added: "But I must go to the Élysée to take my lesson in good manners. Will you escort me?"

He mumbled something that was unintelligible.

"Surely! You are right! I forgot that you had been there once to-day. Aha! after all the trouble her Highness takes with you, you are destined to become a model man!"

VI

Je souhaite à Sa Majesté
D'abord tout ce qu'elle désire,
Ensuite une bonne santé
Et puis toujours de quoi pour rire.
Elle, étant reine, et ne pouvant
Lui souhaiter une couronne,
Je lui souhaite seulement
Autant de bonheur qu'elle en donne!

Poème à l'occasion de la fête de l'Impératrice JOSÉPHINE le 19. mars 1807.



ON the 19th of March the court spent the entire day at Malmaison. The ladies breakfasted with the Empress in the large dining-hall on the first floor. Upon the long stucco walls, with their pale nymphs done in fresco, were hung garlands of flowers, and the table was adorned with exquisite flowers from the imperial conservatories. Her Majesty had especially invited the children to be present at her birthday breakfast. She sat between her goddaughter, Josephine Junot, and her little niece, Princess Lætitia Murat. They were each about five years old—that age of re-

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freshing innocence and budding curiosity. They were revelling in their unaccustomed liberty, or, rather, license, as they filled and refilled their plates with the dainty sweetmeats.

The Empress was in excellent humor to-day, and seemed to have forgotten all her troubles. She had received from her husband a hearty letter which she passed around with delight so that all the ladies could read it.

“We are all longing for Paris,” Napoleon wrote—“the Paris one misses everywhere; and, to satisfy our longing for it, we are running ourselves out of breath after honor—after honor that is to be applauded by an opera parquet.”

“He longs for Paris.” The ladies smiled meaningly at each other, pointing to the sentence as they passed the letter from hand to hand. They also had had news from headquarters in Poland, and knew that some one there did not speak so much about Paris as about a certain Madame Walewski.

But, anyhow, Josephine was pleased. There had also come costly presents and good news from the King and Queen of Holland. But Madame de Rémusat, the Empress' friend and lady in waiting, was far from being so delighted as her

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mistress. She shook her head as she pointed, with an almost tragic air, at the exquisite portrait of the little Prince of Holland. The picture was painted on a box of crystal, set in gold filigree, and had just come by a courier from The Hague.

“The poor Queen !” she said, with a sigh, as she lifted her eyes to the ceiling. “Her Majesty does not know how unhappy she is, thank God ! But I . . . oh, I can read the dread message between the lines of her letters. But in the face of the storm she is an angel !” she added, with enthusiasm.

In spite of the hostess' good humor, the general spirit at the table seemed a little forced. Madame Junot was sad, irritable, and indisposed. Princess Pauline was nervous; she was afraid of her songs. She knew that she sang them miserably, in spite of all flattery. Caroline was—goodness knows why !—in a most dreadful humor—excited and hurt. During the whole breakfast she kept making sarcastic remarks to nearly every one present, but especially to Madame Rémusat, whom she did not like. Madame Rémusat, who, unfortunately, had to take part in the opera, endured all the slights with becoming modesty; but the smile around her mouth grew more and

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more strained, and the glances from her large, piercing eyes were almost cutting.

While the ladies were gathered in the Empress' boudoir to admire the large diamond necklace which the Emperor had just sent her, suddenly the Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleve burst into a nervous fit of crying which ended in a faint.

Although the Princess collapsed near Madame Junot, the latter did not stir to aid her ; on the contrary, the Governor's wife, as though nothing had happened, continued her conversation with Madame Ney, who sat across the table, and who did not have time to arise before the Empress, much alarmed, had rushed to Caroline's side.

They loosened Caroline's dress to give her air, when from her bosom there fell a loosely folded note. The Empress saw it, and, with the forbearance so natural and peculiar to her when it concerned secrets of that sort, she caught it quickly and stuck it in her sister-in-law's hands, which she then held in hers. She glanced quickly at Madame Junot to see whether the latter had noticed anything, for her Majesty had recognized the handwriting as Junot's.

The Governor's wife sat perfectly quiet in her

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low easy-chair, bending over the diamonds with which her hand mechanically played.

When Caroline again gained consciousness she nervously crushed the note of which the Empress, by a slight pressure of the hand, reminded her.

"It is a . . . a letter from Murat," she murmured.

Madame Junot turned her head a little, and peeped sidewise at her from under her long eyelashes.

The performance of "The Barber of Seville" was not a perfect success. Princess Pauline looked bewitching enough in her fantastic peasant costume, but such of her lines as she had to sing she sang so decidedly false that even she herself was conscious of the discord, and soon lost her temper. Those who understood a little about acting—and most of them did—sighed at the memory of how differently the part of *Rosina* had been played five years before there at Malmaison, when Hortense Beauharnais was the acknowledged star of the occasion. Of her acting that evening, Madame Junot wrote many years after this:

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“To her fine acting she united a charming figure and an exquisite carriage. Many years have elapsed since those joyous evenings, but my memory still forcibly recalls the graceful and pleasing image of Mademoiselle Beauharnais, with her profusion of fair ringlets beneath a black velvet hat, ornamented with long, pink feathers, and the black dress so admirably fitted to her small and symmetrical shape! I seem yet to see and hear her, and it is truly a sweet and smiling illusion.”

With such a vision in her memory, it was no wonder that Madame Junot derived little pleasure from Princess Pauline's rendering of the part, and she looked forward with even less enjoyment to the rest of the program. In fact, during the performance of the comedy which followed “The Barber of Seville,” Madame Junot became positively angry that she had been made to take part in such nonsense, and she had much difficulty in controlling herself.

Junot was really the only one in the comedy who covered himself with glory. He had always been a good amateur performer, and this time he played with a verve and fire which lent a decided charm to his part. He was the hero, a

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young peasant who returns to his village after the battle of Jena and finds his sweetheart, *Caroline*, greatly annoyed by the persistent attentions of a shallow-pated fop. But, thanks to the good fairy, the *Empress*, who lives at Malmaison, all ends well, and they are solemnly united by the Mayor of their native village.

Junot gave quite as strong and true an expression of the young soldier's patriotic enthusiasm over the victories in Germany as of his anxiety, his love, and, finally, of his jubilant happiness over possessing his loved one. Princess Caroline played her part with no more meaning than a porcelain doll might have given it. She had an unfortunate accent at all times, and on the stage she lost her natural and self-possessed manner, becoming so overdrawn and sentimental in her acting as to give the impression that she was producing a parody.

But when *Charles*, with half-bent knee and outstretched arms, turned to the bride whom he had won, the royal actress at last showed some life and naturalness. Amid the rousing applause that greeted this scene near the end of the play, a tremor—almost a shock—passed through the bride; while over her painted cheeks,

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before so white, there spread a warm blush down to her velvety neck; her eyes beamed suddenly, and, as she lowered them with a smile, she intoned, in an unusually true and sweet voice, the melody of "*Oh, ma tendre Musette,*" the lovers' last duette:

" In spite of danger and snares,
I belong but to you, my love."

After the curtain had dropped, and while the actors still stood on the stage listening to the applause, *Charles* and *Caroline* stood, full of enchantment, still gazing at each other. The young soldier's face beamed as though he had suddenly had a heavenly vision, while M. de Brigode, who had taken the part of the fop, whispered to M. de Montbriton:

"The Governor of Paris is much too realistic! How well the Princess has at last profited by his instruction! I wonder if they have not rehearsed more often than we? . . ."

Later there was dancing in the gallery, as in days of old, and Madame Junot sat by the side of the Queen of Naples. After the strain and excitement, of which the day had been so full,

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she scarcely tried to conceal how vexed and unhappy she felt.

She saw her husband dance with Princess Caroline time after time, she saw their eyes meet in the gleam of the wax candles, and she understood what all the rest seemed now, also, to understand.

She felt herself more deeply and bitterly humbled than ever before. She thought of the talk they had had a few weeks before, when she had so honestly confessed to him what she felt in her heart. She thought how she had put herself and her feelings as wife secondary, and how earnestly she had spoken to him of the danger to which he politically exposed himself by being on intimate terms with the Emperor's enemies. Yes, enemies! She knew that Caroline's intrigue meant nothing less—and Napoleon, with his clear, penetrating insight into the heart of things, would understand as much as soon as he again set foot in Paris.

This evening she had discovered a great deal more than ever before. For several months she clearly understood that Murat's wife purposely wished to win the Governor of Paris as a political personage. She saw that Caroline, to be

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sure of him for her party should it suddenly become necessary to elect the Emperor's successor, gave herself, her beauty, her womanliness as the price of his support. But to-night ! . . . To-night she had seen, with her womanly instinct, that Caroline also loved Junot. She saw that now—for to-night at least—he was her master.

Laurette had known Caroline Bonaparte for years; and when she saw her smile with half-closed eyes, as she rested on Junot's arms during the waltz, she knew she would obey him in everything. Laurette also knew the power which a woman who really loves has over a man, and she now feared that she might lose him.

The kind Julia, the Queen of Naples, grasped her hand and pressed it several times in sympathy. Ah, she also had had experience, and understood perfectly what was happening !

“ You look so pale, little Laurette—come with me into the boudoir. You—in your condition—you have become dizzy with watching these whirling dancers—come ! ”

The Queen put her arm in Laurette's, and led her to the other room. Laurette heard them call for orange-blossom water, so she swallowed

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some of it when they put it to her lips. She had a certain unpleasant, humble feeling that these kind dames pitied her, so her pride roused her to conquer her weakness.

By summoning all her strong will she arose and said, smilingly:

“This is really too comical! First, the Grand Duchess faints, and then I must faint too, to keep her company. Her Majesty is kept as busy on her birthday as a Sister of Charity!”

At the moment she arose to order her carriage, Princess Caroline entered the room.

“But we cannot possibly let her go alone, the sweet Laurette,” she said, as she turned to her sister-in-law. “Wait a moment until I go home, then you can ride in my carriage; it is easy and roomy. Is it not better, Junot,” she turned to the General, who was just entering the room, “that you both ride home with me?”

Junot was a little in doubt at this, and bent inquiringly over his wife.

“Your Imperial Highness is too kind, but . . . well, what do you say, Laurette?”

The Governor's wife looked up at him. Over her pale face there glided, like a reflection, that

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ironical smile of hers that served her so well as a defensive mask.

“I say, with you, ‘Her Highness is much too kind’; let us say ‘Thanks.’” Then, after a moment’s pause, in which she got herself well in hand, in spite of many objections, she persisted in her wish to go. “This is only a little dizziness—it is over now,” she said, as she looked around. “I suppose you all think that the little one will arrive in the world on the road between Rueil and Paris. In that case, I hope that your Majesty will once more honor us by being godmother.”

The ladies laughed aloud, and began to whisper and tell birth stories, of which they knew some peculiar ones, that they had heard from Madame Frangeau and Doctor Baudelocque. Out in the gallery the dancing was continued.

At last Madame Junot was seated in the Grand Duchess’ elaborate equipage. She sat on the front seat, at the side of Caroline and opposite her lady in attendance, Mademoiselle—or, rather, Madame la Grange, as she had a right to be called, on account of her age and special circumstances. Opposite the Princess sat Junot. Though the night was quite cool, her Highness constantly

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complained of the heat. She pulled the shawl from her bare shoulders in a playful, obstinate fashion, so that Junot was obliged, one time after another, to lay it around her with tender authority, while she sat and fanned herself.

Suddenly it looked as though Caroline's indisposition of the morning would repeat itself. She interrupted the conversation with a little scream and fell back with her hand on her heart. Junot quickly opened the carriage door. In the light of the carriage lanterns he saw the Princess' pale face resting against the silk cushion. Frightened, he grasped her hands.

"Help me out," she whispered, with closed eyes. "Let me walk! . . . A little fresh air! . . ."

Junot almost lifted her in his arms from the carriage. His wife, who had hitherto looked as though she slept, turned her head and looked after them. Madame la Grange made an attempt to descend, but the Governor's wife held her back.

"I beg of you, madame, to remain! Some one must remain to protect the royal dignity."

"You are right; but the poor Duchess . . . such a nervous attack!" And Madame la Grange sat down again—utterly at a loss.

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After a quarter of an hour or so Junot returned, the Princess leaning heavily upon his arm. She was still pale, but her eyes beamed in the light of the torches which the lackies held outside the carriage door. When she took her seat again at the side of Madame Junot, she slipped her arm caressingly around her waist.

“Were you frightened, little Laurette? . . .”

Madame Junot smiled; she was even paler than the Princess. She shook her head, and said, in a respectful tone:

“Of course, I am very sorry that your Highness should be taken so unawares by this—attack; but as my husband was with you, I knew that nothing alarming could happen—especially on an evening promenade along a country road.”

It was three o'clock when the carriage at last stopped at the Élysée. The Governor of Paris offered his hand to the Princess to escort her to her apartment. His coachman was ordered to wait. But Madame Junot was driven home in the Grand Duchess' carriage—alone.

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VII

La seule différence entre eux et moi,
c'est qu'ils sont des descendants, et que
moi — je suis un ancêtre.

Mot du Général JUNOT
(rapporté par Mme. de RÉMUSAT).



WHEN Madame Junot established her elaborate household for the winter in the palace in the Champs-Élysées, she naturally had had many calls to pay and to receive. Some of her experiences away from home have been related, and in the meantime everything in her own home went on as usual. Every morning after breakfast she received her daily visitors—Count Louis de Narbonne, Madame de Zayonscheck, and a few others of her most intimate friends. Every evening, as the Governor's wife, she kept open house, where there would be found, besides friends and acquaintances, nearly all of the foreigners of note who were spending the winter in Paris—German noblemen, Dutch magnates, Polish gentlemen, Italians, Spaniards,

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and always the Portuguese, who still called Madame Junot their "Ambadressess." Besides, there was one special day in the week for Junot's card club—the same club that used to gather at Talleyrand's—and another for the more official reception, where the officers of the garrison and the dignitaries of the city, with their ladies, paid their respects to the Governor's wife in a never-ending procession.

Hospitality had become so habitual to Madame Junot that its demands did not bother her at all—not even under present circumstances. She was by nature a *grande dame*, and, by force of circumstances, she was pushed to the front of this noisy, ever-changing cosmopolitan society which had now begun in Paris. Under the kings, Paris had been but a provincial town in comparison with what it had developed into under the Consulate and the Empire. Paris was then the center of France, and France was the center of the world.

The Emperor wished everybody to be gay, although he and his staff were thankful for a bivouac in Osterode, or for a wooden house in Finkenstein. Whatever happened, he expected Paris to "astonish Europe," and Madame Ju-

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not knew that his Majesty counted upon her to carry out the social functions on a scale "worthy or his good city, Paris."

As "Turkomania" was now the only redeeming thing in the current fashion, thanks to the Emperor's alliance with Sultan Selim, she did not leave her divan on the grand reception nights, but arranged it as an Oriental ottoman with many-colored silk cushions and a *couvre-pied* of gold lace. There she reclined evening after evening, her open silk jacket thrown over a loose India linen blouse. On her head was the inevitable turban, around which were twisted ropes of pearls—a real Queen of the Harem, but *à la française*.

It was an evening in June; it was stifling hot in the large salon, with its colossal chandeliers, lighted candelabras, and wall-lamps. The windows opened on the Champs-Élysées; the mild evening air streamed in, laden with the perfume of the linden-tree that bloomed in the court.

Several of the guests had already withdrawn on account of the lateness of the hour; but Cardinal Maury and a few ladies—among whom was Madame Lannes—sat around the divan. They

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were still playing cards at a couple of tables in the adjoining salon. The Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleve was just finishing a game of whist with the Governor of Paris, Duke Aubusson de la Feullade, and Count de Narbonne. Through the door could be seen the Princess' magnificent bust and the bowed heads of the gentlemen as they deftly handled their cards; their large, three-cornered hats were closely held under their arms. Once more the door was opened widely as the lackey announced, with loud voice:

“His Highness the Prince Archchancellor!”

Cambacérès stepped in. He looked exactly as he did when he voted for the King's death, and as he did at Malmaison, when he dined outdoors with the First Consul, midst a deal of joking and good humor. His long face was just as serious as ever, and his long nose just as solemnly melancholy; his long chin buried itself with the same dignity in the lace cravat; he still powdered his hair and wore the silk waistcoat with embroidery, common at the time of the Directorate. He looked exactly like an official from one of the provinces.

He walked solemnly up to Madame Junot,

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who tried to rise, and said, in his slow, drawling voice:

“I beg you, madame, remain where you are.”

He bent down and kissed her on both cheeks. Then the other guests courteously made room for his Highness, so that he might sit in a low chair at the side of the divan. He graciously accepted the pinch of snuff which Cardinal Maury offered him, and as he slowly lifted his fingers to his nose with a certain grace, he said, in his same slow way:

“I have great news for you, madame.”

“Ah, your Highness, let me hear it right away! His Eminence has not been able to think of anything new for the last half hour.”

“It has pleased his Majesty to create a new dignity and rank for his faithful warriors. He has decided to confer the order of Duke.”

“On whom?” exclaimed all the ladies at once.

Cambacérès sat with his hands on his stomach and twirled his thumbs.

“Yes; now guess!” said he, phlegmatically.

“Marshal Lannes, of course!” said Madame Junot, as she congratulatingly stretched her hand out to Madame Lannes.

“No; that would be much too easy—a child

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could guess that ! No; his Majesty has made it more complicated."

"But who in the world . . . Masséna ? . . . Duroc ? . . ."

The Archchancellor shook his head. "Will no one ever guess it?" He looked around triumphantly. "Lefebvre ! He is now the Duke of Danzig."

Every one seemed surprised, and then they all burst out laughing. Even Cambacérès laughed, and the card-players, stopping their game and coming to the door, joined in the merriment.

At that moment the double doors were opened again.

"Madame, the Marshalin Lefebvre !" announced the lackey.

The lady measured the servant severely with her eyes as she passed him, her fat, red face rounder than usual, and her elbows well out, as though her arms were wings with which she were going to fly.

This time Madame Junot arose and took a few steps to meet the Marshalin, saying, with a smile:

"May I be permitted to greet the Duchess of Danzig ?"

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The new Duchess blinked at the Governor's wife without answering; then, turning triumphantly to the forgetful lackey, who still held the door open, she glared at him:

“There now, my boy, don't you feel ashamed of yourself?”

At this sally—scarcely unexpected, for it was always the unexpected that happened whenever Madame Sans-Gêne appeared in public—at this sally a loud peal of laughter from the lips of all rang through the salon. Madame Junot laughed until the tears ran from her eyes, and, without asking the new Duchess to be seated, she threw herself on the divan, convulsed with laughter.

When the laughter seemed about to stop, and all were busy drying their eyes, a suppressed giggle or a mere glance was enough to cause it to break out again. They laughed that night at the Governor's so that the echoes were heard all over the Champs-Élysées. Madame Lefebvre was flattered by this gaiety, which she never failed to provoke; for she settled down in an easy-chair which Junot had pushed toward her, and laughed just as heartily as the rest.

Suddenly a scream of pain cut through the laughter. Madame Junot tried to rise, tottered,

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and would have fallen had not her husband caught her.

That was the end of the laughter, and the ladies looked anxiously at each other.

“Certainly—that was it !”

“Send for Marchais and Baudelocque at once,” commanded the Grand Duchess of Berg, as she vigorously pulled the bell-rope with her own hand.

“I assure your Imperial Highness,” murmured Madame Junot, with a gesture, “it is over now. . . .”

Count Louis de Narbonne quickly filled a glass with deep red Burgundy from one of the decanters standing on a table.

“Drink, *Madame la gouvernante* ! If you never drank wine before, you must bid Junot’s oldest son welcome to his home !”

Madame Junot smilingly took the glass, which glittered like a ruby in the light, and, lifting it to her lips, gave it to her husband, who drained it in one draught. When she lifted her eyes again to his, she found them fastened upon her with fond emotion.

“Hurry up, Madame Junot !” said Madame Lefebvre, quietly, in her drawling tone, and in a

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dialect that always called forth a smile. "Hurry up, so that Cardinal Maury can come right in and baptize the boy—there are enough of us here for witnesses."

Good humor reigned again, and laughter went the rounds of the little company. Junot beamed with delight, but he scarcely took his eyes from his wife. Suddenly she clutched his arm convulsively.

"It's an impatient youngster, Junot," ejaculated Madame Lefebvre. "He is going to look like his father."

"Ah, but his mother is not known for her patience!" exclaimed Cardinal Maury.

Junot, almost carrying his wife to her room, quite forgot, in his great anxiety, even to offer to escort the Grand Duchess to her carriage. Caroline, without seeming hurt, took the hand of Count de Narbonne, and allowed him to lead her forth, followed by his Highness the Arch-chancellor and Madame Lannes. But the rest of the company, not being so inclined, returned to cheer the anxious Junot, who was anything but heroic while witnessing the sufferings of his wife.

Madame Lefebvre, a clever and experienced

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woman, did all she could to reassure him, and said:

"Now, look here, General! Be patient! Don't hang over her in that manner! You quite unnerve the poor child, and make her unequal to her task." And with her strong red hands the Duchess of Danzig took him by the shoulders and pushed him out of the room. "Now look after him," she called to the adjutants and to Count de Narbonne, who had just come in, "and don't mix in our affairs; for the work that has to be done here requires none but women!"

The newly made Duchess, removing her mantle, said to Marchais, as he entered the room:

"Monsieur Marchais, what can you do for her? Poor little dear! You understand—the first boy—is a bad case."

"Let her get up and kiss all four bedposts while she thinks of the Holy Virgin; that scatters the pains," suggested one of the ladies.

"Goodness, how could you think of letting her get up! That would mean sure death for the child!" exclaimed another. "No, she shall have a rosary under her head; that is the only thing which helps."

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The surgeon, Marchais, a little fellow with a large white apron over his knee-breeches, a huge diamond pin on his breast, and large, round glasses that kept slipping to the point of his nose, called, with loud voice:

“My ladies ! my ladies ! You must either go or keep still ; and as I consider the latter an absolute impossibility, then . . .” He opened the door for them to retire.

“Yes, let us go !” said Madame Lefebvre, appreciating the situation, and snatching up her court mantle.

“I believe it will be twins, Junot,” she said, knowingly, as she bade him good-night in the salon. “Now, brace up ! Think how pleased the Emperor will be.”

The bedroom, though lighted by many candles, was dull and dark in its massiveness. On the high, broad bed Madame Junot lay like one dead—pale and immovable. To Junot, now entering the room and catching a glimpse of her there—so still, so white in the gleam of the candles—the sight was unbearable. A bitter cry of anguish rose to his lips as he fell on his knees beside the bed where lay the delicate form he loved so well.

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She opened her eyes and met his for only an instant.

“If the pains would only come in earnest, I assure you that within half an hour you would hold the child in your arms,” said the surgeon, taking the Governor by the arm and leading him from the room.

Through the corridors and up and down the stairs the servants were hurrying, intent on their errands; the lights burned brightly everywhere in the palace; and in the dressing-room Madame Lallemand was busy gathering together an infant's outfit, while messengers were searching Paris for Dr. Baudelocque.

Suddenly there rang in the ears of all a long-drawn, agonizing scream—the peculiar scream of pain and anguish which escapes from a woman's lips only at the moment of birth . . . Then, at last, came the first faint cry of the young heir, and the adjutant who was stationed at the door announced:

“Monseigneur has a son !”

When Junot, pale and worn, was permitted to enter the sacred presence, his eyes first sought his wife who lay exhausted, like a frightened

The Governor's Wife

dove, but in whose face shone all the glory of motherhood, with a beauty that drew from him the deepest reverence of his heart.

Their eyes met over the little head, so wrinkled and pink, that nestled on her bosom, and they both knew and understood at that moment that in spite of all missteps, misunderstandings, and troubles, they loved each other with the love that never dies; that for them there were no other ties in all the world in comparison to the strong, fresh, youthful love that there united them. She smiled at him, and there was a secret, jubilant victory in her smile that he alone understood.

Cardinal Maury and Count Louis de Narbonne, who had been patiently waiting in the salon, now discreetly presented themselves at the door, and, at a faint nod from the young mother, they entered the room. At the same time Junot, quite beside himself with joy, said:

“May I introduce to you the Emperor’s godson, my little Napoleon?” lifting the child high up in the air. “And you, my son, may I introduce to you the holy Gallican Church, and in this other gentleman the legitimate aristocracy of your country? Ha!—‘legitimate’—he is as

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legitimate as any one—any one of the second generation after the Revolution or the Empire. Think of it, my dear Narbonne, as aristocrats the only difference between you and me is this: you are the scion, but I—I am the sire !”

VIII

C'est aujourd'hui l'anniversaire de Marengo! C'est un jour heureux pour nous.

NAPOLÉON (en route pour Friedland).

Car je me regarde comme l'homme le plus audacieux en guerre qui peut-être ait jamais existé.

NAPOLÉON (à Ste Hélène).



AFTER the battle at Eylau, in the autumn of 1806, Napoleon spent the winter in recruiting and reorganizing his army, and he was now waiting only for good weather to begin the campaign again.

Junot now studied more eagerly than ever the large wall-maps that illustrated the seat of war for him on the walls of his room. With whole regiments of different colored pins he marked the positions of the opposing armies. Over these he pored for hours, and he never tired of explaining to his wife the many combinations and movements that were made.

With the certainty of an experienced and intelligent soldier, he warmly praised Napoleon's preeminent skill. For instance, the Emperor had just chosen his winter position at Passarge,

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from which he was easily able to protect that part of his forces engaged in the siege of Danzig, as well as to ward off from himself those who were waiting for a good opportunity to fall upon him. At the same time, he was so placed that he could get the benefit of the great resources of conquered Germany.

Junot wished his wife to understand thoroughly what a stroke of genius this move was—to maintain an army of two hundred thousand men unmolested through the winter in the enemy's country.

“He has taught even his enemies to respect him!” he exclaimed. “On the banks of the Weichsel his soldiers are bivouacing as securely as though they lay along the Seine or Rhone, and that with four powers declared against them! From his barracks among the snowbanks of Poland the Emperor is ruling his widespread kingdom quite as efficiently as he could from his executive chamber in the Tuileries. You see, Laurette, that which is now going on in Poland is exceptional in the world's history. . . .” And with deep chagrin that he could not be with Napoleon, he pushed his charts away.

This feeling deepened with the advance of

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spring; and after the fall of Danzig, toward the end of May, it was plain to the Governor of Paris—as, in fact, to all who were versed in military matters—that the decisive moment of the war was near at hand.

When Madame Junot awoke early one morning in June, and saw the sun shining from a clear, blue sky, she longed for the peace and quiet of the country, for the woods of Raincy, and for the roses that she knew were blooming on the terrace at Raincy. At first, however, it was her intention to take merely a short morning drive, for the fine mist that always foretold a warm day was slowly rising over Paris, still drowsy in the early morning light. But the thought of Raincy bewitched her, and its magic drew her on. So, ordering her carriage, she was away.

It was real summer now. The fresh morning air was balm to her weary senses, and the straight old trees welcomed her to Raincy with their branches spread protectingly over her. The smooth lawn stretched temptingly away under the trees, until it lost itself like a cloud in the blue line of the forest.

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For the first time in many days Madame Junot felt rested—indifferent to everything around her. She felt, too, the luxury of being alone—the pleasures of solitude without one touch of loneliness. For once she was glad to be free from the company with which she was wont to surround herself, and happy in idly basking there all day in the sun and shade of Raincy. Her book fell from her lap and lay unnoticed in the grass, although it was Madame de Stael's new romance, "Corinne."

At last her attention was roused by the sound of horses' hoofs, and, rising slightly, she listened, and then she heard the clink of spurs on the stone stairs that led to the terrace. When she had taken a few steps in that direction, she met her husband in his General's uniform, with the hussar dolman over his shoulders, coming quickly toward her down the broad stairs. He frantically waved the paper he held in his hand.

"You are a pretty runaway! And to-day you have made me ride in a flying gallop from Paris to Raincy, only because I was afraid that some one might get ahead of me and tell you the great news. Guess what it is!"

"It is easy enough to guess," she answered,

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happily, and with great assurance. "The Emperor, of course, has won another victory."

"Certainly!" he said, ironically. "You are so spoiled, you Parisian ladies, who sleep in silk beds and take the victories of the army along with your morning chocolate as a personal tribute to your superiority. Not one of you, on the other hand, has ever given a moment's thought to the effort, money, and blood that are expended upon the single word, 'Victory.' You don't realize what it costs!" And he went on, in his impetuous, warm-hearted way, loyally upholding another's fame, and winning from his wife the warmest love and admiration, not for the Emperor, but for himself.

She laughed and leaned lightly with both hands against his breast.

"But can't you see I am dying with impatience to hear the news! Why blame me for having such confidence in the army and such faith in the Emperor? We have been taught to expect everything from them, and I am sure they have done something splendid this time."

"You are right; they won a splendid victory at Friedland, on the 14th of June."

Laurette threw her arms about his neck. "The

The Governor's Wife

14th of June, you say? That must be Napoleon's lucky day! Do you remember Marengo, seven years ago?"

"I, too, thought of that immediately." And his expressive face grew dark and stern. "That was another field where I was not permitted to be."

"Ah, my dear" (she looked earnestly into his eyes), "why do you always embitter every message of victory with this complaint? You know that the Emperor thinks you serve him better here. He has chosen you among them all to watch over the apple of his eye, his Paris. Do you think that he would have entrusted this to Bernadotte, for instance?"

Junot laughed. "By the way, you should accustom yourself to saying the Prince of Ponto-Carvo. But I feel I am not old enough to sit at home with 'responsibilities' while the others are fighting for honor; they are now all mentioned in the Emperor's bulletins. But I—I shall be forgotten by the army! And the staff with the golden eagle! Laurette, do you believe that can be won on the streets of Paris?"

"One can be just as happy and just as great without being a Marshal."

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He turned impatiently and let her arms drop.

"No, I cannot," he said, "I cannot."

Laurette sighed and thoughtfully resumed her seat, vaguely watching a gay butterfly as it danced in the sunlight, while he walked up and down the terrace. Then, at length, stopping in front of her, he bent down over her, saying:

"What are you thinking of?"

Without raising her eyes to his, she answered, dreamily:

"I am wondering if the Emperor has really done right in . . ."

"What? . . ."

"Oh, nothing! It was an idle thought that came into my head. Do you think that I would criticize the Emperor?"

"Yes, he knows that you would, and without a bit of hesitation."

Beyond the Niemen, at Tilsit, the last bulwark of holy Russia, the young Czar Alexander was the guest of the conqueror. Just as the proud Francis II. had come to Napoleon's bivouac in Urschitz, so now the young Czar and the King of Prussia sought him at Tilsit to beg for peace.

On the other hand, Napoleon stood there, in-

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toxicated by his success, with the whole world crawling at his feet, and with Europe apparently ripe for the Western empire—that dream of his which he hoped at last to realize; that daring fancy of his mind which he would now write large on the page of authentic history.

There, at the gates of the East, stood Napoleon, in the robe of Charlemagne, and with a scepter that guided the fate of the people of the world. At his nod Europe bent the knee and wreathed his brow with the laurels of Cæsar, proudly conscious that Fate had honored them as a people by permitting them to honor her dearest child.

There, at the gate of the East, stood an army supporting Napoleon with a courage and a daring equal to his own, its strength and devotion unparalleled since the days of Mohammed. They had learned a new religion—the religion of honor, patriotism, and personal ambition. The enthusiasm for the new faith went to the heads of the converts like new wine, and they were already intoxicated by their own fame and too keen a sense of their own power.

In the Revolution the French had fought for liberty and equality; but they had tired of both

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as soon as they had won them, for they did not know how to use them. In place of liberty, Napoleon set up honor and power as the rewards for successful effort. From the first he used successfully these two spurs to stimulate his army and then his country to deeds of valor. Eleven years before, from the snow-clad peaks of the Apennines, he pointed out for his hungry soldiers the rich cities of Lombardy, its meadows and billowy fields of ripening grain, and the terraced vineyards that led, as it were, by steps to the heights of fame, with grapes and wine for the bravest.

Now he showed them the golden steps in the ladder of rank and position: the title of Duke, the Marshal's staff, the King's crown, the great eagle of the Legion of Honor; and in the souls of these thousands of men he awoke an all-consuming ambition which, guided by his hand, and sensitive to every pressure, should make his own success. He was not afraid to awaken the egotism of his men and their envy of each other, for he felt himself strong enough to control them, to show them their goal, and to limit and use their power to further his own plans. He tried his power, he tempted his fortune, he stretched

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the bow to the utmost — and, see! it did not break !

In Paris they scarcely spoke of anything beside the Emperor's friendship for young Alexander; about the newly won victory over the Russian army at Friedland; about the King of Prussia, whose whole kingdom Napoleon could have taken, but of which he graciously allowed him half; about the new crown with which the Emperor would reward his third brother; about the restored freedom of Poland; about the pleadings and sorrows of the beautiful Queen Louise. Enthusiastic announcements ! fablelike plans ! piquante anecdotes!—ah, there was enough to talk about!

On the 27th of July, 1807, Paris was awakened by cannon salutes from the Hôtel des Invalides. Then they knew that the Emperor had reached home.

IX

Il est facile de voir, comment il était au pouvoir de Napoléon de bouleverser cette âme noble et généreuse et surtout dévouée à lui.

Mme. JUNOT (de son mari).

Je prouverai au peuple français, que moi seul, je suis fait pour gouverner, décider et punir.

Mot de NAPOLÉON.



THE GOVERNOR OF PARIS at once requested a private interview with his Majesty, for the cold glance and formal bearing with which his "idol" had received him in the forenoon cut him to the quick, embittered every thought, and gave him not a moment's peace. His request was as quickly granted, and the meeting was appointed for the same evening between eight and nine.

In his impatience Junot came earlier than the appointed time, fairly flying up the steps, and scarcely noticing the salute of the guard and the pages as he passed through the *salle des gardes*. In the *salon de service* only four officers were on duty: the Adjutant, the Chamberlain, the Mas-

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ter of Horse, and the Palace Préfet, for it was quite unusual for the Emperor to receive at such a time. While Junot was waiting for the summons from the Emperor, he forced himself to speak a few words to the gentlemen present; but giving this up, he soon began to pace the floor. A quarter of an hour passed, then another, and still he was not admitted. It was known that the Emperor was at work this evening with the Librarian of the Foreign Department, Monsieur de la Nautte-Hautévive, and it was evident that he had much to do.

Out of humor over the long wait, the Governor of Paris seated himself at last in one of the big red chairs in front of the fireplace, staring hopelessly at the ceiling. The familiar room, with its few pieces of furniture, was but faintly lighted. Solemn landscapes, grown black with age, hung on the dimly lighted walls, and everywhere through that part of the palace were scattered pictures of Marie Thérèse, who was often portrayed as Minerva surrounded by the Graces.

Junot knew these apartments as well as he knew his own. How often during the glorious days of the Consulate had he wandered arm in arm with Napoleon through those spacious

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rooms! Would Napoleon forget him now? Could he forget his old companion in arms? Alas! the Emperor had spoiled him, and had made him believe that they were close friends in spite of the purple and the crown—the same friends they had been at Toulon, and in Italy, and in Egypt. And now . . .

Junot covered his eyes with his hand to shut out the vision of that cold, strange glance from a comrade's eyes, and of his haughty demeanor. The memory of it was like a nightmare—some hideous phantasm.

At last the guard opened the door of the Emperor's salon and announced the Governor of Paris, who entered in dress uniform, spurs at his heels, and with his hat under his arm. Ah, how long since the two had shared meals and bed, and had strolled arm in arm through the Jardin des Plants!

The Emperor dropped his paper, a copy of *Le Moniteur*, and looked long and sternly at Junot from his easy-chair near the window. Then, pulling at his vest and blowing a few specks of dust from the lapels of his coat, he stood without speaking.

“Sire!” cried Junot, impetuously, drawing

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nearer, and no longer able to endure this cold demeanor and crushing silence. "Your Majesty!" he almost entreated; and then he stopped.

"Yes, Monsieur Junot, it is time we two came to an understanding and spoke plainly," said Napoleon, stepping to his desk, and, after some searching, drawing forth a paper which he hastily perused. "It is a surprise to me, Junot, and quite inexplicable, that you could betray the confidence of your friend and sovereign to the extent revealed by this paper. What is the meaning of this?" And with an impatient gesture he threw the paper down and turned away.

"I can understand," answered Junot, pointing with disdain to the paper—"I can understand now what it is that your Majesty charges me with. I recognize the handwriting and the form of a report. And from such a source and with such evidence you judge your oldest friend and also your own sister!"

"Be still, you hothead! No one may mention names here. I can see plainly enough that you have a bad conscience."

"A bad conscience in regard to you and your wishes you have never seen in me, Sire," an-

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swered Junot, firmly. "So you cannot possibly know how I look under circumstances which have never existed."

"You, too, whom I have trusted as I would myself these fifteen years!" continued Napoleon without listening, as he dropped into a chair and tapped its arm emphatically with his snuff-box. Then suddenly lifting his head he said, angrily:

"And not even a little caution—one would think you were a beginner! At two o'clock in the morning your carriage is seen at the Elysée; the Grand Duchess plays whist at your house, and is there early and late; she drives to the opera in your carriage, sits in your box . . . It really looks as though she did not have the slightest conception of what is becoming to a Princess!"

"Her Imperial Highness has always been an intimate friend of my wife," said Junot, meekly.

"Those were other times, other customs! Does Madame Junot allow herself to be used as a plaything in this comedy? I understand her but poorly if she allows herself to be duped either by you or Caroline!"

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Junot took a step toward the Emperor, and instinctively placed his hand upon his sword.

“Your Majesty, do you remember at Marseilles, when I was in love with Princess Pauline, that I did not think life worth living after you refused me her? How did I behave then? . . . Did I make any attempt to disobey your will at . . . It might, perhaps, have been easier then! Did I act like a man of honor, Sire, or did I not?”

“Bah!” said the Emperor, “that was a different matter! A young girl cannot be named in the same breath with a married woman. You know that as well as I—yes, better. A pretty mess if this report had fallen into the hands of her husband, and noble consequences for you!”

“If Murat is offended,” said Junot, hotly, “he knows where he can find me. If his Highness feels offended—and I deny that he has the slightest reason for offense—then . . .”

“Great God! That would make the scandal complete! Are you crazy, Junot? You know that I do not tolerate duels among my men. I decide all difficulties. Murat knows nothing; he will keep quiet, and you will leave Savary alone for this report. He has but done his duty. I

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have a right to know everything that happens in Paris—and especially what my Governor is doing.”

Junot was silent. The Emperor walked to and fro, slightly bent forward in deep thought! He then placed himself with his back toward the fireplace, and turned to Junot.

“Can you honestly say that you did not suspect what the little intriguer really wanted of you?”

Junot was shocked. His face reddened, and involuntarily he threw his head back as he met the Emperor's glance.

“I don't know what your Majesty means.”

“Then all Paris knows more than its Governor. I am sure that every cavalier in Paris could answer my question. I know Caroline—she is more ambitious than all her brothers combined. And you have not discovered that? . . .”

Junot remained silent.

“Answer me, man! Defend yourself! Don't you understand what you are charged with?” shouted Napoleon, angrily.

Junot lifted his large eyes, and closely observed the Emperor. “No,” he said, proudly. “The charge which I think you mean is so

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impossible, so unreasonable, when it concerns me, that I cannot believe that any person of sound reason could have made it."

"A man, and especially you, can do much to win a woman," said the Emperor, more quietly.

"If an assurance is necessary between you and me," said Junot, bitterly, "then I here give you my word of honor that there has never been a word of politics spoken in the conversations with which your sister has honored me."

They were both silent for a few seconds, the Governor of Paris meeting with pride the piercing glance of the Emperor, who again snatched the paper from the table.

"But it is impossible," he said, impatiently, half to himself. "Savary has a fine nose, and everything speaks that the plan . . ." He glanced, with an uncertain, questioning look, at Junot, who did not stir from the spot.

"Tell me all!" said Napoleon.

"Your Majesty, what I might say concerns but me, and that I will not say."

"You mean, then, that this was nothing but a common love story which concerns nobody?"

Junot lifted his head proudly but remained silent, while the Emperor drew slowly near him.

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Then he spoke eagerly: "Your Majesty, you may take my life—it is yours by right; you may deprive me of my sword and rank—I shall not complain. But you can never make me break what I consider the law of honor."

"You have called me your best friend . . ."

"It was the pride of my life that you allowed me to do so."

"And now, for the sake of a stupid tradition . . . Ah, you Frenchmen!" Napoleon turned around and passed his fingers through his hair.

"I demand only that you shall honestly tell me what has happened between you and Murat's wife—mark well that I say Murat's wife, for Caroline has shown that she is Murat's wife rather than my sister."

Junot laid his hand upon his heart. "I give you my word of honor. I have nothing more to say."

Napoleon, looking sharply at him, shrugged his shoulders, and strode thoughtfully up and down the floor.

"I neither want your life nor your sword, which you so romantically offer me; but . . . There is another matter of which I wish to speak, Junot. It will not do for one person to hold the

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two important positions which you now occupy. You are both Governor of Paris and my First Adjutant. You may take your choice of these posts, but the offices must be separated hereafter."

Junot, with emotion, straightening up and looking proudly into the Emperor's eyes, made no answer.

"You understand," continued the Emperor, impatiently, "that it will hereafter be impossible for the Governor of Paris—the first commander of the most important division of the army—to go freely in and out of my tent, by day or night, as my First Adjutant." He stopped, and, eying him closely, he continued in a louder voice: "You cannot complain. I have given you your choice."

Junot was still very pale when he answered:

"The choice is soon made. I will never give up—never give up—the post I filled for you at Toulon, at Arcole, Lodi, and Castiglione, in Egypt, and now, last of all, at Austerlitz. . . . Never !"

"You don't seem to count for anything the fact that I made you Governor of Paris?"

"Sire . . ."—Junot made a step toward him

The Governor's Wife

—"I have been as proud as a god at being the Governor of Paris. I now formally resign my post."

"You are crazy, Junot!" shouted the Emperor, stamping upon the floor. "But I have other things to do besides talking reason to you. Go!"


General Junot bowed, as with downcast eyes, but with a firm, proud carriage, he withdrew.

Napoleon once opened his lips as if to speak and call him; but, with a shrug of the shoulder, he suddenly faced about, walked quickly to his room, and slammed the door.

X

Je n'hésite pas un instant à charger cette malheureuse relation de mon mari avec la reine de Naples de tous ses malheurs et à la regarder *comme cause de sa mort*.

Mme. JUNOT (Mem.)

O THE ÉLYSÉE!" Madame Junot ordered her carriage the next morning after her husband's interview with the Emperor at the Tuileries. Though it was early, the August day was already oppressively warm, and within the carriage Madame Junot leaned back with closed eyes and a sad, almost pained, look upon her face. Her light shawl had slid from its place, revealing her beautiful arms and shoulders, and giving a glimpse of a bosom that heaved with many a sigh.

After a drive of a few minutes the Governor's wife reached the Élysée, where she ascended the stairs. She did not enter the salon, where the members of the court usually gathered, but

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made her way straight to the private apartments of the Princess, and sought from the first maid in attendance to arrange an immediate interview with her Imperial Highness.

Caroline had just arisen, and was seated on a low couch which, like the rest of the furniture in the room, was covered with white lace over rose-colored silk. One of her maids was putting on her stockings, while another was busy removing her large, lace nightcap.

Hastily slipping her feet (one still bare) into some Turkish slippers, with her abundant hair hanging loosely over her lace-trimmed chemise, and with a colored handkerchief about her bare neck, Princess Caroline gave Madame Junot a quick, searching glance as she entered; then running toward Laurette, she grasped her with both hands, her own face becoming pale.

“My God, how you look ! What is the matter ? Has Junot met with an accident ? . . .”

Then turning to her maids, she said : “Go ! let us be alone !”

Madame Junot threw herself upon the breast of her former friend and sobbed uncontrollably, for she suddenly felt, strangely enough, that here she should be understood and find help.

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“Laurette, what has happened?” asked Caroline again, anxiously.

“Ah, madame . . .”—Madame Junot lifted her head with difficulty and dried her eyes—“he has had a scene with the Emperor which . . .” She sobbed again convulsively, but fought to control herself. “You know how terribly he takes everything to heart, and the Emperor is more to him than anything else in the world . . . Oh, such a night! . . .”

“But, Laurette!” she screamed, “he has not killed himself? . . .”

“No; but he has threatened to do so. Ah, to the others the Emperor can say what he likes, but to him . . . He has the sword in his hand . . . It will end with that—I feel it. He has but one god, the Emperor, and then when he misjudges him . . .”

“But my brother likes Junot so much,” said Caroline, now much more quiet. “There was a time when he was more to him than any of his brothers. I cannot understand for what reason he now . . .” She regarded Laurette searchingly.

The Governor's wife dropped her eyes from the piercing glance.

The Governor's Wife

“The reason was but a small one . . . I have forgotten it.” Her voice was as proud as a queen’s.

Caroline bent down and fastened the shoe on her bare foot which she drew up under her, and said:

“Madame Junot, I shall speak to my brother regarding this.”

“He has resigned his post as Governor of Paris! He will retire from the army! Think of his leaving the army! It will be his death!”

“But Junot exaggerates—I know his dreadful disposition. The Emperor could not have meant his orders so.”

Madame Junot sat with her hand before her eyes, her elbow resting on her knee. She slowly answered, and with difficulty, but with perfect clearness:

“His Majesty spoke about ‘plans’ which, if they were not direct treason to himself, were treason toward France and the Constitution . . .”

Caroline, startled, leaned back on the couch, pale and silent. Neither spoke for many moments.

“But, Laurette, you should speak with Bonaparte yourself!” she at last exclaimed, suddenly.

The Governor's Wife

"He has always been tender and considerate of you. Do you remember Malmaison ? . . ."

"Ah! I have thought of everything," interrupted Madame Junot, quickly. "But you must speak with him first, madame. If he calls me later on, I shall go to him."

Caroline understood her. "You are proud, little friend," she said, slowly, with admiration.

Madame Junot smiled ironically.

"Do you think so? It seems to me as though this night has killed all pride in me. How I have fought! . . . For I cannot, I will not, see him destroy his future and our children's future. To break with the Emperor would mean to us not only an unhappiness, which he never could survive, but it would also bring with it complete ruin."

The Princess, after another long silence, said, decidedly:

"You did right in coming to me at once, Madame Junot. You know I have never forgotten our old friendship, and my interest in you both is so great that I shall gladly use all my influence with Bonaparte to reconcile him and your husband—not a difficult task, I hope."

The Princess, now perfectly composed, realized

The Governor's Wife

that she would have an unpleasant scene with her brother, which she had hoped to avoid; but she dreaded what Junot might do in his despair, and she also feared the resolute, courageous Laurette, who knew all. But, above all, Murat must not know what had happened between the Emperor and Junot, nor should the Governor of Paris be permitted to resign his post, for, if he did, all the world would know that his action had been brought about by direct charges.

"You look quite miserable, Laurette," she said, gaily. "It is too bad you are married to such a hothead! Stay and drink a cup of tea with me, as in the good old days. We have not as yet had a sensible word with each other, just because of all this fuss your husband is making."

To imitate her brother, the Princess now drank tea in the morning, which she had served on the roomy night-stand, also covered with rose-colored silk under a magnificent spread of Mechlin lace.

"Ah yes, these men! these men!" she sighed. "They make us nothing but trouble! Sister Paulette, in comparison, really has a very comfortable time of it."

"But is Prince Camille such a fine example of a husband?" exclaimed Madame Junot, half

The Governor's Wife

laughingly, yielding to the genial warmth of the tea, and deeply touched for the moment by recollections of their early married life, when she and Caroline, each in love with her own husband—free from care, and very happy—had freely chatted thus over a basket of grapes or some other dainty morsel.

“Prince Camille! He cares no more for her than for an old pair of boots, so he cannot trouble her much. No, I mean because she has no children. She has no one to think of and work for; she has only to amuse herself and take the world as it comes. She goes her way—and he goes his. But we!” The Princess sighed, then added, in a burst of confidence: “Can you believe it? The other day I found on the table in my room a note from Murat to a certain little obscure . . . Yes, you know her very well. I need but say that her mother is an Englishwoman. Just think of it!—he had written it right there, while I sat at his side with Achille and Lætitia!”

Madame Junot had no difficulty in picturing to herself this family group.

“And then people were surprised when I turned this miss away from my ball. You remember my last grand ball, just before the Em-

The Governor's Wife

peror's return? . . . The Queen of Holland protected the minx—just to irritate me, of course! You should have heard the uproar she made in her behalf! Now she also has Josephine interested in this 'model' woman. Ah, my dear Josephine, you will regret that!"

The Princess laughed in her forced, hard way. She was now in good humor again, for it always amused her to talk with Laurette, who had been acquainted with the whole family from her early youth. Caroline, like all the Bonapartes, was not at all nervous, and the thought of an impending scene with her brother did not disturb her good humor in the least.

"She is as wily as a snake, that girl, and goodness knows what the men see in her!" continued Caroline. "But they are all crazy about her. Yes, I hope I am not too indiscreet when I tell you that the Governor of Paris also pays his respects to the Guillebeau family on Boulevard Madeleine. There is gambling, they say, in the mother's salon, and later in the evening the daughters appear in gipsy costumes, dancing and beating tambourines. What do you think of that?"

"I think your Highness had double reason,

The Governor's Wife

then, for turning her away !” Laurette said, quickly. Then she continued, more slowly :

“A gipsy with tambourine ! How is it possible that she dare present herself in this house !”

The Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleve appeared not to understand Madame Junot; but she leaned back and rang for her maids to aid her to finish her toilet for her drive to the Tuileries, and soon after this she bade good-by to Madame Junot with a cordial embrace, at the same time sending her regards to Laurette's husband.

XI

“ Le travail est mon élément; je suis né et construit pour le travail. J’ai connu les limites de mes jambes, j’ai connu les limites de mes yeux—*je n’ai jamais pu connaître ceux de mon travail.* ”

NAPOLÉON.

“ A vous écouter, Madame, on croirait que je vous ai frustrée de l’héritage du feu roi, notre père! ”

Mot de l’Empereur
à la Princesse Caroline.



AFTER Napoleon had definitely arranged his home at the Tuileries in such a way as to suit his tastes and his needs, he admitted no one to his private study except his secretary, Meneval. There, in this large and practical room, he worked from breakfast until dinner, at six, interrupted at times by audiences with his ministers and others in an adjoining room—the so-called *arrière cabinet*.

In his study the Emperor permitted no intrusions; he had consecrated it to his work. When busy there he often walked the floor by the hour, dictating rapidly. The overworked secretary sat at his writing-table by the window, and

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restlessly heaped up sheets of paper without finding time to arrange or classify them, while the Emperor was in the room. At the middle of the floor stood Napoleon's own writing-table, mounted with bronze. This was also entirely covered with books and papers, and underneath it, screwed to the floor, stood a little safe to which the owner alone had the key. Behind its artistic and unbreakable lock were concealed the most precious and important secrets in the empire. Napoleon's large portfolio was the only confidant to which he dared entrust his new-born plans, his unfinished combinations, and his daring political sketches and dreams.

After an unusually busy forenoon, his Majesty the Emperor had had a plain luncheon, alone, as usual, and was on the point of resuming his work when the Grand Marshal, Duroc, announced to him that the Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleve wished an immediate interview with him. He directed that she should be admitted a half hour later, and, turning quietly to his secretary, he picked up the thread of conversation where it had been interrupted by his frugal meal.

“Well, Meneval, have you the letter ready for

The Governor's Wife

the King of Naples?" he said, as he seated himself in a writing-chair, which he seldom occupied, except when he was about to sign his name.

"I trust you did not forget to impress upon him the fact that, in the present condition of Europe, the loss of Corfu was the greatest calamity which could befall the country! That is enough. I need not give him any reasons—he knows them. But underline my words."

The Emperor was not in humor to-day to write details. In silence he was shown one document after another which the secretary had had time to finish while the Emperor was at luncheon. The pen spluttered and spread a rain of ink around itself as he quickly wrote his almost unreadable signature, and often took no other trouble than simply to sign a large *N*.

Since his return from Tilsit he was more than ever full of work; for, in spite of his constant care of every detail in the affairs of the country, there was still much with which he could not occupy himself while in the field and at such great distances from Paris. The many advancements and changes in civil and military service needed Napoleon's personal attention, besides the long-contemplated change of officials, the re-

The Governor's Wife

formation of *Corps Législatif*, the care of the fleet (which, since Trafalgar, needed all the restoration it could get), the coast defenses, which had to be strengthened, and—before everything else—the complete rearrangement and reorganization of the finances of the empire and of the Bank of France. Added to this, he also had an eye upon all the great road and canal undertakings, which were recommended in all parts of the country, and the monumental works for the use and beauty of Paris, which he impatiently hurried. His untiring endeavor to get sufficient good water for his capital had almost succeeded. Large fountains in all parts of the city played day and night, furnishing even the poorest with abundant water. The Arch of Triumph, the Vendome Column, the Temple (which he had decided to erect the year before, in honor of French arms—*le Temple de la Gloire*), the newly begun bridge over the Seine (which should compare with the Austerlitz bridge and take its name from Jena), the erection of enormous market halls (which he called “The Louvre of the Poor”)—all these occupied his time, just as though he were personally the leader and chief of these many undertakings.

The Governor's Wife

To him came all reports—even regarding the smallest details. Stronger and stronger there grew within him a jealous desire to be not only the one who ruled the present time, but also the only one who judged, thought, and acted for the future.

At last, after having carefully read all letters and despatches, he arose and glanced carelessly at the clock. He stretched his hand for his hat and sword, nodded to Meneval, who scarcely had time to look up from his papers, and went into the salon to receive his sister.

Princess Caroline had waited a long time, and, though accustomed to her brother's indifference, she was already in a bad humor on account of the delay. He had let her wait like any other suppliant! His manners were not merely thoughtless, they were positively offensive! He demanded the utmost deference from every one, but it never occurred to him to put the least restraint upon himself.

He nodded indifferently to the Princess, who courtesied repeatedly as she entered the room, attired in a forenoon toilet of white embroidered *mousseline*, with a short overskirt of rose-colored gauze, décolleté, and almost without sleeves.

The Governor's Wife

Over her arms hung loosely a light shawl, gleaming with silver thread, and on her head was a heavy velvet toque decorated with white plumes. What with head-gear, the noonday heat, and the irritating delay, was it any wonder that her fine complexion was redder than was becoming to her?

“Well, my dear Caroline, what have you on your mind?” he asked, coolly.

“On my mind? . . . What else should a sister who has not seen her brother for several months have on her mind than the wish to be permitted, in all confidence, to bid him welcome home?”

Napoleon smiled. He walked up to the Princess, clasped her waist with both hands, lifted her from the floor, and put her carefully down again, steadily looking straight into her eyes with the same unmerciful glance.

“A-ha, little friend, and you think that you are so clever that you can deceive me! So Junot has already told you all?”

“No,” she answered, without taking her eyes from him, “Madame Junot has done it.”

Napoleon whistled softly. He turned on his heels and commenced to walk up and down the floor, with his hands behind his back.

The Governor's Wife

“*Madame la ‘Gouverneuse’*! She is a smart little devil! She sends you to me; no one but she would have thought of disarming me in this manner!”

He stood awhile in front of the Princess, who remained silent, swaying his body to and fro; then he exclaimed:

“What competent and daring diplomats women are when it concerns something or some one they love! Laurette—the proud Laurette—has come to you! Naturally, she would not, on any condition, lose her title—‘*Madame la Gouvernante de Paris*’!”

“She supposes, as I do, that Junot, in his usual impetuosity and completely blind personal devotion to you, has acted too impulsively,” said the Princess, quietly and unrestrained.

“And you, my dear Caroline,” said the Emperor, ironically—“you have, of course, no idea of what has caused Junot to take this step?” . . .

“Not the slightest!” answered her Highness, still unruffled.

“My compliments, Annonciade! You excel even Mademoiselle Mars! Unfortunately, you do not act nearly so well on the stage as in real

The Governor's Wife

life. But you need not exert yourself too much here," he said, dryly. "I know to a dot all about your nice little romance with the Governor of Paris."

The Princess did not answer, but she flushed with indignation.

"There are none who cause me more disagreeable, nonsensical trouble than my relatives." And the Emperor wandered angrily up and down the room with long strides, working himself up more and more. "Have I not had one scene after another this whole winter with Ney and Lannes — yes, even with Augereau! — because they insist that I always prefer Murat to them. God knows that I do not prefer Murat for any other reason than because he is married to a Bonaparte! I do everything for my brothers and sisters, and what thanks have I for it? In the field your husband makes trouble between my men and my best Generals, and here at home you are entangling Junot in a stupid story!"

The Princess had now recovered her self-possession. She was absolutely sure that Junot, in his usually chivalrous manner, had been silent about everything concerning her,

The Governor's Wife

so she could easily deny all her brother's charges.

"I really do not comprehend what it is that your Majesty is charging me with ! I have been an intimate friend of Madame Junot for ten years, and if it pleases your Majesty to listen to all the gossip of evil-minded and envious persons, then . . . Yes, then, of course, I have nothing to say."

"One need not be evil-minded to think it a little suspicious when the Governor's equipage can always be seen outside Élysée. And, not alone that, you have shown yourself with him in public during the whole spring—even at Tivoli !—danced with him at all balls . . . Ah, you may easily see that I am well informed !"

"Now this is going too far !" exclaimed the Princess, indignantly. "I should not be permitted to dance with Junot, who has known me since I was a little girl, and whom Signora Lætitia to this day calls her sixth son ? Is it this with which you charge me, sire ? Then you should see that some one in the Tuileries does not behave worse than at the Élysée !"

This plain thrust at the Empress made Napoleon furious.

The Governor's Wife

"Silence, Caroline!" he said, severely, stamping his foot. "After all that I know about you, it would be becoming for you to behave more modestly. If you had been led on to this story merely because you were infatuated with Junot, who is a handsome fellow and who understands women to perfection, I should have thought nothing of it. I can understand that one might tire of Murat! But you busy yourself with politics; you have had entirely different motives. You—" he looked at her and lifted his hand. "Ah, perhaps you don't think I have seen through it all!"

The Emperor placed himself in front of her and took her forcibly by both shoulders.

"You need not take the trouble to defend yourself; I know what I know. But one thing I demand: that you give me an honest answer to this question:—Have you ever confided to Junot your, as it seems, quite elaborate plans?"

"No," answered the Princess, in a short, pouty manner. She realized that there was no use in further concealment.

"Well? . . . Now, at last, I can see how it is with this whole affair! You knew Junot's

The Governor's Wife

loyalty to me, and you have been clever enough not to confide your intrigues to him ; but you wished, in any case, to arrange it so that the Governor of Paris, when it came to the point, could not deny you anything ! That was not so stupidly thought out for a woman—or, rather, only a woman could devise such a plan. The worst of it is, however, it is now impossible for me to find out whether Junot would have fallen into the trap at last.”

Caroline was not easily scared; her nerves were completely mastered by her will—a characteristic of the family which she possessed to the highest degree. Her brother's anger and irony did not make the slightest impression upon her.

“And if I really had had the thought with which your Majesty pleases to accuse me, would it really have been so great a crime ? Remember, all this began before the 5th of May ! And if the calamity had happened to France and to us all at that time, God forbid now and always . . . Well, your Majesty is but human, like the rest of us . . . Would it then have been agreeable for us—for your Majesty's sisters and brothers, who have the first right to your care—that a

The Governor's Wife

stranger, in the hands of the Empress and Eugene de Beauharnais, should become our master ? . . .”

“A stranger ! I do not know why Louis’ son should not be as near to me as your husband and Achille?”

The Princess shrugged her shoulders and smiled meaningly.

The Emperor understood it, of course, very well, for he answered, dryly:

“Dear Caroline, you can be very clever, but once in a while your fancies get the best of you. You have already given several versions to the story about this poor child’s birth . . . It is all nonsense. I hope that Murat in the future can be as sure of his youngsters as Louis is of his !”

“Napoleon !” The Princess arose threateningly ; her face burned scarlet under the white feathers of the toque.

The Emperor seemed not to hear her, nor to be inclined to continue the conversation, for he knew from experience that he might now expect both fainting and tears. He turned around and glanced at the clock on the mantel.

“Good-by, Madame Caroline; you detain me

The Governor's Wife

much too long with your stupidities. By the way, remember me to Madame Junot, and tell her that she need not fear for her stately title. Do you believe that I, for the sake of your extravagances, would part with a person who can fill his position and be of unaccountable use to me? He will remain the Governor of Paris, of course, as long as there is use for him there, whether he wishes it or not. But he must go away for a while until they are through gossiping at the Faubourg St. Germain. . . . Well, but this has nothing to do with you! Now let me see that in the future you behave decently."

At the door he spoke again: "It would really be better to rid myself of you and your husband than to send Junot away. Why do you not retire to your ducal estate? Look at Elisa! She is of use to me, and the stupid things she does are at least not done in Paris."

The Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleve, who a minute ago had lifted her head full of expectancy, when the Emperor spoke of sending her away, dropped again offendedly into her former position.

"My estate! my dukedom!" she said, contemptuously. "To others your Majesty donates

The Governor's Wife

crowns; but to us, your own sisters, who have a certain right . . .”

“Right!” interrupted Napoleon, ironically.

“Dearest sister, it seems to me that we have quite conscientiously divided the inheritance from the King . . . our father!”

XII

Paris — Paris, c'est la France !

NAPOLÉON.

Son caractère m'était connu. Il ne fallait pas aller trop loin avec lui, mais il fallait se donner de garde aussi de demeurer en arrière.

Mme. JUNOT

(sur l'Empereur).



MADAME JUNOT had spent the afternoon before the 15th of August, the anniversary of Napoleon's birthday, with the Empress; and now that it was evening she was seated in her own home, tired and not a little irritated because she had been obliged to spend a whole half hour on the road between the Tuileries and the Champs-Élysées. The coachman had picked his way foot by foot, stopping frequently to avoid the streams of people who poured from all directions toward the Tuileries, both to see the fireworks along the river and to view the Champs-Élysées illuminated with the lanterns in the national colors.

Madame Junot was glad to be safely home at last, sitting cosily in her large arm-chair, and looking thoughtfully but uninterestedly out upon

The Governor's Wife

gayly lighted Paris. The glow from the many lanterns outside faintly lighted her room, while the excited exclamations now sounded more hushed in the distance, joyously mingling with the noise from the passing crowds.

Madame Junot's thoughts had nothing to do with the Emperor's birthday; they were not even occupied with the grand fête in his honor, at which she should preside on the morrow at the Hôtel de Ville, where, as the Governor's wife, she should do *les honneurs* for Napoleon. Her arrangements were already made with all the skill of an adept in the art of entertaining, so they were giving her no further trouble.

The door to the adjoining salon opened suddenly; she heard quick, well-known steps which gradually grew slower and finally hesitated. . . . She sat and listened anxiously, without rising or changing her position, as Junot walked slowly into the room.

There was no other light in the room than that which came through the windows from the street, so she could not see his face; but from his walk and the relaxed carriage of his shoulders she knew that there was something wrong—in fact, she felt it the moment he entered.

The Governor's Wife

"Is it you, Junot?" she asked, slowly, looking toward the door.

"Yes," he answered, quietly, as he sat down opposite to her at the table and rested both hands upon his knees. The sharp explosion of the rockets as they rose in the air and the joyful exclamations from the streets were plainly heard in the quiet room.

Suddenly, with painful effort, he said: "Within a month I leave Paris."

She started from the chair. "Can it be true? What do you say? Leave Paris! . . ."

"Napoleon does not want me here any longer. He will send me away when he himself comes home. He knows me; he knows that that is the hardest punishment he ever . . ."

The Governor of Paris stopped, straightened himself in the chair and drummed loudly with his fingers on the table.

Madame Junot bent forward and grasped his hand.

"Tell me all, dear one," she said, tenderly, soothingly.

"There is nothing more to tell," he answered in the same forced, indifferent manner. "The Emperor has just appointed me as First Com-

The Governor's Wife

mander of the Army of the Gironde . . .” And to her exclamation, which showed both surprise and relief, he raised his hand hopelessly, and exclaimed:

“Can you not see that he wants to get rid of me? That this is disgrace and exile? . . .”

Laurette at the same moment grasped its full import, realizing its meaning just as clearly as he. “Is not that what I have always told you?” she thought; but she could not bear to tell him so, now adding:

“Surely the Emperor has shown a very remarkable sign of the confidence he has in you, and he could scarcely have meant this in any other way than as a special honor to you. Did you speak with him yourself?”

“No; I received the news through the War Department. . . . But I will not accept it,” he continued, impetuously. “I will not do it. No one need imagine that he can drive me out of the country in this manner! As soon as I am away . . . Well, you know, the absent one is always in the wrong.”

He impatiently began to walk up and down the floor. She followed him anxiously with her eyes, and at last she said:

The Governor's Wife

“Speak to the Emperor yourself to-morrow at the festival, or apply for an audience. Ah, could he only see you as I see you now ! . . .”

The sincerity of her voice touched him, and drew him to a seat on the arm of her chair.

“I will let you remain here. You shall see that they don't make trouble for me with him. My own Laurette ! Had I not you, then . . .”

She laughed lightly, glad for his tender, earnest glance and words.

“Then you would comfort yourself in some other way !” She sighed, and they both sat silently for a moment, hand in hand. Then she slowly arose.

“Let us retire. To-morrow will be a hard day for both of us.”

Napoleon had purposely selected his birthday, the 15th of August, for this feast, by which the city of Paris should celebrate his home-coming. He wished to give as much *éclat* to the occasion as possible, and thus flatter the city. He well knew that he had more difficulty in conquering Paris than in conquering the whole world, and he never felt quite sure of his absolute possession of it. The Emperor knew that it was first

The Governor's Wife

necessary to control the dance-halls, wine-cellars, cafés, and salons of Paris before he could lead France and, through France, Europe. This latent undercurrent of ever-changing resistance, which Paris always offered, irritated and troubled him more than he was really willing to admit. He who never feared the whole of allied Europe for a moment, and who, with a glance and a smile, got his armies to go to the end of the world; who understood how to compel the mighty Roman Church to make the most unheard-of concessions; who reduced the Senate to a choir of praise-singing, humble spirits; who unflinchingly dissolved the whole tribunal when he thought it no longer useful—he did not fear, the word “fear” did not fit him; but he felt greatly annoyed by the saucy criticisms in which the Parisian tongues and pens indulged in regard to himself and his institutions. He had far more respect for a gathering of people on the carousal square, or in the Palais-Royal, than for a hostile army of 300,000 men. With untiring care he saw that the troops which lay in Paris never had combats with the inhabitants of the city—“It would be impossible for me to take part against the people!” he said.

The Governor's Wife

Many important scenes in the history of France had been enacted in the old Hôtel de Ville, but now it was not considered large enough for the coming festivities. In consequence, there was erected for this occasion a stately and very roomy hall in the inner yard of this building. Count Frochot, the Préfet of Paris, had taken it upon himself to arrange the program for the festival, and to be the leader of it all. The details, however, had to be laid before Duroc and the master of ceremonies, M. de Ségur. The Governor of Paris had but to receive his Majesty at the foot of the stairs and lead him into the hall. His wife and the Préfet had the honor of escorting the Empress.

Madame Junot was quite equal to the demands of the occasion, but she was nervous over the knowledge that her husband intended to make use of the first opportunity to speak a few words to Napoleon about the journey to Bayonne. He was too impetuous to postpone such a disagreeable task any longer than was necessary, and she was very anxious to know how the Emperor would receive his petition.

It was a mild, still August evening. She stood at the head of the stairs, by the side of

The Governor's Wife

Count Frochot, awaiting the arrival of her Majesty's cortége. But she was not the least cold in her toilet of silk tulle—*lamée d'argent*. Behind her stood twenty-four ladies, all in white, who had been selected to welcome the Empress as representatives of the foremost names in the industrial and ceremonial world of Paris.

They had waited a long time before the carriages at last drove up. After her Majesty came Napoleon's mother, then the Queen of Holland, the Grand Duchess of Berg, and Princess Stephanie of Baden. The imperial ladies were received with all the form dictated by etiquette as Empress Josephine stepped slowly up the stairs between Madame Junot and the Préfet.

The Governor's wife opened the ball with the Grand Duke of Berg. Junot danced with Princess Stephanie. Now Murat had always shown himself very gallant toward Madame Junot, but to-night he excelled himself. He was, as it was then the fashion to express it, a real "Troubadour," overflowing with sentimental compliments. He wore a glittering, fantastic uniform in "Polish style," as he himself expressed it, but his brother-in-law, the Emperor, called it

The Governor's Wife

“*à la Franconi.*” But, anyhow, he looked stately in his *chapska* and his short jacket, *à la Polonaise*. Madame Junot, who did not have more respect for his Highness than she used to have for him when he was but General Murat, joked gayly with him about all the plumes which he had used during the campaign. He assured her, with his hand upon his heart, that he had thrown them away as soon as a drop of rain or a grain of dust had fallen upon them—“So that my lady’s color, white” — here he looked at her snow-white costume—“should always be spotless.”

She burst out laughing, and, with a flattering remark about his brilliant charge against the Russians at Eylau, she answered, gayly, “With such a lot of plumes—yes, even with less—one ought to lead France to victory.”

The Emperor, as usual, walked around the hall, and stopped behind them, hearing the last remark.

“She has not forgotten her repartee, ‘*Madame la Gouverneuse*’ ! You are wasting your time in being gallant to her, Murat. She has always been a model of devotion to her husband.” He met her glance, fleetingly, and turned his head half away. “Do you remember, madame, when

The Governor's Wife

you implored me last summer to be permitted to go to Junot at Parma? What do you say now to a trip to Bayonne?"

Madam Junot smiled. "If your Majesty would permit it, I should prefer to remain in Paris."

"Ah, the ladies! they are all alike! Paris! Paris! . . . As though they could not live outside of Paris!"

"Yes, the gentlemen—the gentlemen, they can . . ." Madame Junot smiled maliciously, looking up at the Emperor. She lowered her eyes again, afraid that she had shown too much familiarity among all these people who did not belong to her usual circle, and her eyelashes threw a soft, dark shadow over her finely flushed cheeks with their little dimples. Although she was not so stately as her beautiful Grecian mother, who had been Bonaparte's first love, she still resembled her very much. After this by-play Napoleon had intended to pass on; but he remained standing and pinched her ear slightly as he forced her to lift her head again.

"How old are you really, Madame Junot? Is it already your intention to hide your age? By the way, it seems to me that you are very modestly attired."

The Governor's Wife

Madame Junot was, of course, as décolleté as the other ladies, which meant a good deal, so she laughed as she answered:

“I am twenty-three years old. It has never occurred to me to hide my age—at least, not from you, Sire, whom I could not deceive, anyhow.”

“Yes, we are indeed old acquaintances, Madame Laurette. Before you were married you were a pale little youngster—but now!”

Laurette did not answer, but bent her head a little.

“Look at her, Murat! There is a wife who is in love with her husband!”

Murat laughed in a noisy manner that always irritated and hurt Madame Junot.

“Junot has always had a wonderful power over women. Do you remember in the Orient, Murat, the yellow Xraxarane? He could have burned her at the stake like an Indian widow when he went away; she would not have objected. At the most, she would have extinguished the fire with her tears.”

Madame Junot knew that it was the Emperor's delight to tease the young matrons with their husbands' old love affairs, which he had at

The Governor's Wife

his fingers' ends. She had heard them so often that she was hardened to them.

"Ah, *Jaunette*," she said, laughingly; "she was sweet. I have her portrait on the mantel in my room."

"Indeed! I have more and more respect for you, Madame Junot. You are exceptionally sensible."

"Ah, I assure you, your Majesty, you over-value me. *Jaunette* was long before my time. But perhaps had you spoken about some one else, not quite so colored . . . Had she resembled another favorite odalisk from down there who was once shown me—a silk-soft blonde, with eyes like sapphires, and such hands . . . and lips . . ."

Murat stopped laughing, and looked at Madame Junot with an anxious warning; but Napoleon laughed aloud. This quite impertinent allusion to his well-known Egyptian mistress was far from offending him; on the contrary, it amused him for the moment, at least.

"Unfortunately, I have not seen the lady of whom you are speaking," he said, with assumed earnestness. "Ah, so—did Junot also keep white slaves in his seraglio?"

The Governor's Wife

“No, Sire—oh, no. They were reserved for—for—the Sultan.”

“Yes, the Sultan can allow himself many caprices!” The Emperor smiled. “Although, unfortunately, they are not all satisfied—is it not so, Madame Junot?”

He watched her closely with a smile, with something peculiar in his glance which she did not quite understand. He had already turned to go, but bethought himself, and said, softly, coming quite close to her:

“*À propos!* Your husband spoke to me, a little while ago, in regard to this trip to Bayonne. It did not quite suit me at that time to consider any change in the plan, but I did not finish my conference with him. He ought to know, though, that my orders are never changed. Besides, I have use for him at Bayonne in matters of which he shall soon know. But you . . . well, you tell me that you would rather remain in Paris . . .” And with a careless nod he continued his round.

Murat could not get the conversation started again; his partner had suddenly become peculiarly distracted.

XIII

On aime toujours bien plus pour soi-même que pour autrui, et le premier des biens que l'amour donne, c'est d'aimer.

Mme. JUNOT
("Étienne Saulnier").



IT was an evening toward the end of this same momentous month of August. The clock had just struck nine; and as it did not look as though Junot would soon come home, Madame Junot thought she would retire, as she was tired and, unusual enough, alone. While one of her maids was brushing her hair and arranging it for the night old Josephine entered the room.

"Madame," she said, "there is a lackey in the waiting-room with a letter from the Tuileries. He has orders to wait for monseigneur. I believe it is in haste."

Madame Junot turned her head languidly, while she slowly filled the hollow of her hand with eau de Portugal from the crystal bottle.

"Who is it from?"

"From the Grand Marshal."

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Madame Junot arose quickly, impatiently twisted the loose, hanging hair into a coil high on her head, and into it hastily stuck a comb studded with pearls. She threw a shawl over her lace dressing-gown.

"Let Martin and Dubois saddle their horses at once, and see if they can find monseigneur. Wait, I will write a few words. . . . He must be either with Madame de Lalligant or with Cardinal Dubelloy. So here—please! . . ."

Laurette had suddenly lost all inclination to go to bed, so anxious was she to know what Duroc could wish to tell her husband. She wrapped herself in her large cashmere shawl, and had the candles lighted in her boudoir.

Junot, tired out, came in with the open letter in his hand.

"Thank God, you are here at last!" His wife turned quickly away from the window where she had posted herself to watch for him.

"Have you met Martin or Dubois? . . ."

"No." He threw the letter indifferently upon her writing-desk. "I—I was . . . I found out, just the same, what it was about."

Madame Junot looked at him. "Ah! I un-

The Governor's Wife

derstand . . .” She took the letter and read it through, half aloud.

It was from Duroc, but it concerned entirely different matters from what she had thought. He notified Junot, in few words, that Princess Catherine of Würtemberg, the future Queen of Westphalia, would arrive at Raincy the next morning with her suite. His Majesty had decided that she should breakfast and rest at Raincy after the journey.

The Emperor did not wish that his brother's prospective bride should make a grand entrance into the city at high noon, as did the Duchess of Bourgogne and other Princesses under *l'ancien régime*. He thought that she might remain with the Junots at Raincy, which was but a short distance from Paris, until the evening.

“Madame Junot knows how to talk to Princesses. Let her entertain Princess Catharine until I send Jerome for her !”

During the reading Junot sat down on the sofa between the windows, crossed his legs, and was thoughtfully stroking his silk stockings. He was still in evening dress, with low shoes and white knee-breeches. By his side lay his large three-cornered hat.

The Governor's Wife

“Well, this may prove to be quite amusing !”
Madame Junot folded the letter energetically.
“He gives us orders to receive a Princess to-morrow morning and amuse her the whole day, just as he would give his valet orders to bring him his snuff-box ! It is almost eleven o'clock, and we have but the night before us in which to drive to Raincy and make all arrangements !”

Junot pulled at his shoe and looked up. He knit his brow and whistled, but he did not speak.

Laurette looked up at him uneasily, sure that he had come directly from the Élysée. What could he have heard which made him now so sullen and disinterested in everything at home ? She wrapped herself in her crimson shawl with a wrathful gesture, crossed her bare arms, and stood looking straight at her husband.

“Junot . . . you don't help me at all ! . . .”

“Ah, Laurette”—he impatiently put his foot to the floor and bent forward, with his elbows on his knees—“I have really so many other things to think of ! What do you wish me to do ? The Emperor wishes it thus.”

He looked up at her while he spoke. She suddenly felt a deep pity for him. She knew

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what the trouble was—now, when every one thought that he was in disgrace with the Emperor, they were all turning away from him.

“You are right; there is nothing to do!” she exclaimed, gayly. “Do you wish me to answer Duroc? Of course, she is welcome, poor child, who has to marry Jerome! I shall arrange it all as well as I can; but you must be *maître de plaisir*. We must certainly amuse her with a hunt after breakfast. . . .”

Madame Junot had settled down at her desk while she spoke. She tried the pen upon her thumb nail, to see if it were cut right, and took paper from the portfolio. When she was glad and happy she would nearly always drive his indisposition away. And after this gay rally Junot lifted his head and smiled.

“Of course she must hunt—a Teutonic Princess! She is as stiff as a stick, I have heard. You must chat with her, Laurette; I shall have to be excused. I am not much acquainted with Princesses other than Spanish and Portuguese, and deliver me from them!”

“Ah, you also know a couple of French ones—better, I mean.”

Madame Junot turned her proud little head

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a bit, and smiled with her fine, sarcastic, self-confident smile, which had a shade of superiority about it.

"I wonder, dear, if this hunt will be as amusing to you as the hunts at Raincy used to be!"

But when she saw the flush upon his forehead and the impetuous manner in which he suddenly turned his head away, there flitted an expression of anxiety and deep pity over her face. She arose and slowly sought his side.

"Junot, . . ." She searched for words that did not come, but she remained standing at his side with one hand on the chair on which he sat.

Junot was deeply touched by the expression in this face which he, in spite of all, loved the most in all the world. Easily moved as he was, he drew her hand to him and murmured, as he bent his face down over it:

"Why don't you say something, Laurette, because I have been away to-night? Upbraid me, be angry with me, as you used to be till . . ."

"What can I upbraid you for? She is like the brother; when she wished to rule, then . . ."

He guessed her thoughts, and, bitterly hurt in his manly pride, he said:

"I understand you! In this, as in everything

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else, you see in me only a desire to obey—a Bonaparte !”

She gently drew her hand from his, and leaned against the window-sill.

“Do you imagine that any woman could resist Napoleon when he loved, or thought he loved ?”

Junot smiled a little doubtfully. “I have, at least, never known one.”

His wife still looked steadily at him. There was in her clear, beaming glance, and in her proud smile, something which made him anxious, and which at the same time astonished him, but which, at this moment, he did not comprehend.

She moved her lips as though to speak again, but controlled herself. As she passed him in walking toward her desk, she said, plainly, in her usual voice:

“Yes; there you see . . .”

Junot remained sitting, and followed her thoughtfully with his eyes while she finished her letter, with her back turned to him.

In his present tired and embittered soul there awoke a suspicion to which he dared not listen. Had Napoleon tried to win his wife? Had she, for her husband's sake and out of love for him,

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enough courage and power to resist what no other woman in France would have resisted? He remembered, suddenly, her expression when she had said to him once, in a tender moment, "No woman could resist Bonaparte if she did not love another man with all her soul." He had laughed and said that if the thought of the Emperor haunted all the women of France to the same degree as it did her, then Napoleon's power over the men would soon be over. In answer she had smiled without offering any explanation.

He arose and walked to and fro with quick, irregular steps, stopping at last behind her chair, while he slowly and tenderly passed his hand over her hair.

Apparently Laurette did not feel his touch, for she bent more intently over her letter; but at that moment they were both thinking the same thoughts, though neither was willing to admit the fact.

Madame Junot drove to Raincy that night in the moonlight. After her came the head cook, Réchard, leading a whole train of wagons with provisions, table-service, and toilet articles. In the morning, at half-past nine at the latest, the

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castle should be in perfect order to receive the Princess of Würtemberg, and it was Madame Junot's intention to do all in her power to make the reception as brilliant as possible. She knew that the Emperor would inquire about every detail, and she wished that his royal sister-in-law should get a favorable and lasting impression of French taste and ceremony as soon as she set foot upon Parisian ground.

The Governor's wife did not have time to sleep many hours that night. Early in the morning her husband came, followed by an Adjutant, to be present at the arrival of the Princess. Madame Junot, already awake, was sitting in bed drinking her chocolate when Junot entered, still in his riding-costume.

"Let me see if you have dark rings under your eyes, Princess *Gracieuse*!" he said, gaily, as he sat down upon the edge of the bed. "You must not, of all things, look too tired; that would also be reported to his Majesty!"

"Ah, you need not fear," she laughed. "He has not as yet forbidden us to paint, thank goodness!"

Junot laughed hilariously. "The poor Josephine—if that were the case!"

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He started to go, but turned at the door.
“Tell me—are you quite sure what kind of dress . . . ?”

Laurette already had one foot out of bed. She made an impatient movement of the hand.

“Just be quiet, my dear! As I was able to accustom myself to wearing hoop-skirts in Lisbon without falling upon my nose, neither you nor the Emperor need trouble yourself about my attire. I have heard that in Germany grand toilette is required for an occasion like this; but here . . . You know that it is only at the Tuileries that we wear mantle and *chérusque*. I know the Emperor—he wishes that the Princess shall understand from the first moment that the French court is something exceptional, something superior . . . and still just like the rest!”
She laughed.

Madame Junot had not for a long time felt in such good a humor as to-day. She felt that it was a favor Napoleon had shown them when he entrusted his royal sister-in-law to her and her husband, and she was keenly alive to the honor he had done them and the opportunity the occasion afforded them.

While her maids dressed her in her dainty

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demi toilette of white silk moire and a toque with white ostrich plumes, she was wondering what the demeanor of the Princess would be. Laurette, for her part, was not especially interested in the Princess, for, like every one in Napoleon's old circle, she was disturbed by the Emperor's decided inclination to make family connections with the old courts; and, besides, she was vexed, as a woman and a Catholic, at the despotic manner in which he had caused Jerome to dissolve his first marriage, and to treat his young wife and child. She remembered the spring morning two years before, when she and Junot had unexpectedly met young Jerome Bonaparte in a deserted *posada* near Merida. She thought of their breakfast in the sunny garden, where Jerome, in his despair and sorrow, could speak of nothing but his separation from his "Eliza," who, by the Emperor's order, and in spite of her pitiful condition, was not permitted to land at any harbor of France, Holland, Spain, Portugal, or Italy.

At that time Eliza was on her way to England, while he, going to his brother, implored him for pity on his young wife and unborn child. Ah, yes!—poor little Jerome. He had, perhaps, not

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been able to resist the temptation of being called imperial or royal highness, with a view to a crown and the hand of a princess . . . Madame Junot smiled a little maliciously, while she buttoned her long, white gloves, at the thought of the love-meeting she should soon witness between the playmate of her childhood and his royal bride. "I wonder if he remembers the *posada* on Estremadura's perfumed flower field!"

Princess Catherine of Württemberg was at this time about twenty-five years of age. She had parted with her German attendants a few days before, and now felt very strange among all these unknown French people who surrounded her. She was small of stature, stout, and quite awkward; but she had a pretty, open, bright face, which, on account of the intense August heat and her painful position, was extremely red under the high and somewhat old-fashioned coiffure.

Madame Junot approached the Princess rather formally, for, Parisian as she was to her fingertips, she surveyed her royal guest critically. Her costume—Madame Junot saw that at once—was much too antediluvian even for a German

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Princess ! Who would have the front of a dress draped with a "*Mathilde*" nowadays ? Who would wear such tight, smooth sleeves ? They reminded one of the Marie Antoinette fashion. And such a train ! In Paris the Princess from Stuttgart would look like a lady from the provinces.

The demeanor of the Princess, though forced and often painfully uncertain, was proud and dignified. She was exceedingly gracious toward her hostess and the young matrons whom the Emperor had selected for her court ladies. Her color changed every moment; and though she tried hard to control herself, it was visible to all that she was in an embarrassing position among so many strange persons; and she had a dreadful anticipation of being soon taken by her bridegroom (who, according to her standards, was already married), and of being introduced to the Bonaparte family.

"Well, *Madame la Gouvernante*, what do you say to my little sovereign ?" whispered Marshal Bessières, who was acting for Prince Jerome in meeting the Princess. And he looked smilingly through his cross-eyes at her Highness, who, with stiff grace, was receiving the compliments

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of the persons whom her lady in attendance, Madame de Luçay, presented.

The Governor's wife turned slowly around and looked up into Bessières' face. She bit her lip and shrugged her shoulders slightly, while she answered :

"She does not scare me, dear Marshal, especially in that costume ! Could you really not have given her a hint as to the fashion in Paris ? Of course, it had to be so ; but don't you think the artist could have made that a little smaller ?" she said, with an ironical glance at the enormous miniature portrait of Prince Jerome which, in a setting of diamonds, hung from the Princess' necklace and dangled to and fro on her bosom at the least movement. "It is a pity that she is obliged to show herself before them all in this manner."

"A hint ? Dear Madame Junot ! And you have a little experience yourself in regard to royal highnesses. Did it ever occur to you to let the Princess of Brazil know that she looked like . . . ? Well, I don't understand much about ladies' costumes, but Jerome does, unfortunately. This much I do know : you cannot joke with her Highness."

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"Indeed!" Madame Junot was now very much interested.

"Yes, just imagine. . . . When we went through that barbaric wedding ceremony, you know—well, I thought that the occasion required that I, as representative of the groom, should say something—something funny, to show we were not at all duped by the queer old ceremony. I wished her to see that we, as sensible and modern people should, took it all at what it was worth—a tradition, and a custom which we were forced to follow. But she . . . *ciel!*"

"What did she say?"

"She gave me a rebuff so sharp and unexpected that I don't yet know what she meant. And what I said, I assure you, was really most innocent."

"Oh, but you are too hard upon her, good friend," said Madame Junot, suddenly springing to her defense. "She is naturally very irritable under the present circumstances, and must constantly be on her guard. She is, indeed, in a trying situation. But she can be agreeable if she wishes. See how she smiles at her father's minister, Herr von Wintzingrode!"

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Bessières shook his head.

“Yes, poor child! Will it not be amusing to hear what the Grand Duchess of Berg—and especially the Princess Stephanie—will have to say about her?”

“You will be sure to hear that, if it is really so important to you,” answered the Governor’s wife, a little dryly.

The Princess expressed a wish to dine with the other ladies, and she accordingly joined them in the beautiful library, where an elaborate repast was served. As the Princess was expecting the arrival of Prince Jerome soon after dinner, she begged Madame Junot, if it were possible, to let her know a little beforehand of the arrival of his Highness. An Adjutant, armed with a field-glass, was therefore stationed at the gate to watch the long avenue of poplars, ready to report the first glimpse of the Prince and his suite.

As the time drew near seven o’clock, Princess Catherine’s nervousness and anxiety became more noticeable. When Madame Junot saw how unhappy she was, she forgot her prejudice against her, and hurried to ask whether the Adjutant

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had not as yet announced anything. But when she opened the door into the large dining-room, where Junot presided at the gentlemen's dinner, she was met with such peals of laughter that she lost the heart to put her question. It was apparent that Junot, Bessières, and the rest who were interested in neither Jerome's first nor second wife, considered the visit of the Princess to Raincy only as a capital occasion to feast and to renew old acquaintance and mutual memories of the campaign.

So, turning from the revel, she quickly threw a shawl over her shoulders and walked across the lawn to the Russian PAVILION, where the poor exiled Adjutant, M. de Grandsaigne, was dining all alone, his field-glass on the table before him.

"Sister Anna, sister Anna, seest thou any one coming?" she called, gayly, as she put her hands up to her mouth as a trumpet.

"I see, oh, mistress, but the grass which is a-greening and the sun which is a-shining!" laughingly answered the young aristocrat, delighted at the prospect of company.

Madame Junot stood for a moment holding the door-posts of the pavilion, while she swayed lightly to and fro on her heels. She laughed,

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though with a bad conscience for joking over such a serious matter, while the poor Princess sat in agony within. Then shading her eyes with her hand, she gazed down the avenue.

“You see but poorly, sister Anna! There is the dust-cloud, and in the midst of it Sir Bluebeard himself.”

Monsieur de Grandsaigne, looking at her with big eyes, burst into a jolly laugh, in which she joined him when she caught the full force of her own joke.

“Hasten to my husband, Monsieur de Grandsaigne, and tell him that the Princee will be here in a minute. I shall go to her Highness.”

The gentlemen hurriedly left the table and gathered, with the ladies, in the billiard-room, while Junot hastened to receive the Princee and his suite.

The Princeess, alone in the large center salon, suddenly became calm as she stood there in her studied position, at the side of the chair reserved for the Princee. All could easily watch her movements, for the two salons were divided only by a row of pillars.

Jerome Bonaparte was dressed in the customary salon costume worn by French princees :

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white cashmere knee-breeches, and silk dress coat *à la française*, with the large decoration of the Legion of Honor over his breast. Thus attired, he entered alone from the music-room, where his suite remained, and quickly walked toward the Princess, who took a few steps to meet him.

They greeted each other in a few words which, however, were spoken in too low a tone for the ladies and gentlemen in the billiard-room to hear them.

The Prince then sat for a moment in the chair beside his bride, as had been previously arranged. He asked her a few questions in regard to her journey, and after that arose.

“My brother awaits us,” he said, loudly, so that all could hear it. “He is impatient to greet his new sister, whom he already prizes highly.”

Princess Catherine smiled—it was always the same forced and dignified smile—and lightly followed her husband to the entrance of the music-room. But scarcely had she passed the door when she changed color, swayed, and, with a painful sigh, raised her hand to her heart.

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"She is fainting!" exclaimed Madame de Luçay. "Get water and eau de Cologne!"

The indisposition did not last long, for the young Princess almost immediately opened her eyes again.

"Oh, I am so tired!" she said, in a natural, complaining voice—"so tired after the journey," she added.

"Your Highness" (Bessières approached her, bowing with hat in hand), "the carriages are waiting; but if your Highness wishes to postpone the journey . . ."

"No, no!" She arose, hurriedly; she was anxious to put an end to her martyrdom.

"Madame Junot"—she turned to her hostess with the forced, stereotyped smile which was so very unbecoming to her pretty, honest face—"I assure you I shall never forget Raincy and your hospitality. It will always remind me of some of the most agreeable moments of my life."

Madame Junot made a courtesy and kissed the Princess' hand. This time her deep obeisance was sincere. She comprehended, at that moment, the bitter, cruel humiliations which this stranger, daughter of a strange king, had suffered during these few hours here in her home.

XIV

Ma santé n'a jamais été si bonne —
tellement que je suis devenu plus galant
que par le passé.

NAPOLÉON.

(Lettre au roi Joseph 1807.)



THE EMPEROR of late had shown the Governor's wife marked attention; it looked as though he wished to deny all rumors of Junot's disgrace. His long talk with her at the festival at the Hôtel de Ville had been noticed and commented upon, and everybody was talking about the very great favor which had been shown them when she and her husband had been selected to receive the new Queen of Westphalia. Napoleon had, besides—some said as thanks for her hospitality at Raincy—recently sent Madame Junot magnificent bouquets and rare plants from the imperial hot-houses. And now, at the last grand ball which the Grand Duchess gave at Élysée in honor of King Jerome's wedding, he had again been exceptionally courteous and had held a long con-

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versation with her. The other ladies of the court—most of whom were awed and scared by the Emperor to such a degree that they were at their wits' ends when they were obliged to answer his abrupt questions—commenced to show themselves very envious of Madame Junot. She could joke and laugh and be perfectly natural with her quick repartee, and she often succeeded in awakening upon the Emperor's lips that pretty, bright smile which was so temptingly tender.

Madame Junot, for her part, did not avoid the Emperor, nor did she make any special effort to attract his attention. She had, as well as he, *l'esprit de principauté* in a high degree. It amused her to be, and to be considered to be, the first lady in a salon, and she never avoided a success. But, on the other hand, she was not anxious to become the target for the court gossip which she felt had already begun to occupy itself a great deal with her. The Emperor approached her this evening at the Grand Duchess' ball, after he had been a silent observer of the first dance from his throne, and she noticed the hurried, malicious discretion with which those near them withdrew from hearing to give them an oppor-

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tunity for a *tête-à-tête*. She felt, in spite of being used to the stage of society, that her blush suffused her neck as well as her cheeks.

This unfortunate blush capped the climax; it was commented upon even more than the conversation itself, which lasted but a few moments. The Governor's wife blushed! She, who was usually impertinently self-possessed! Perhaps out of malice, Princess Pauline, who was not a specially clever observer, called her sister Caroline's attention, pointing with her fan toward the other end of the hall where Madame Junot, with downcast eyes, was just then making a deep obeisance before his Majesty. She noted, too, how graciously he patted her blushing cheek when they parted.

"Bonaparte begins to pay attention to the ladies—at least, to one of them! Perhaps he thinks that Junot is too much engrossed elsewhere to notice it."

The Grand Duchess of Berg betrayed no interest in the episode, nor did she intend to let Pauline suspect her game, as she answered, dryly:

"Laurette has always had great opportunities with the Emperor—she looks so much like Sig-

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nora Panoria! If she were not so stubborn, she could have made her fortune long ago. And now she is more beautiful than ever”

Then she stopped, gazed in front of her a little absent-mindedly, and smiled faintly.

“It is a great temptation, though,” she sighed, with a moral, sentimental shake of the head. “Who knows whether she can resist it? Poor Junot!”

“Yes, poor Junot!” sighed Pauline, pityingly. “But he has his opportunities, too.”

After this soliloquy Princess Caroline rose to go; but she stood for a moment on the steps that led from the platform on which the two ladies sat. She lifted the train of her dress with regal dignity, and with a gracious movement turned her beautiful head toward her sister.

“So you still remember that old love story? Dear Pauline, you are really more faithful than I should have thought you!” And then she softly added a sisterly warning: “But you should not speak too loudly about your weakness for him.”

Princess Borghese was so indignant at this that she could not, for a moment, find words to answer.

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The Grand Duchess, with proud bearing, stepped down the purple-covered steps.

The Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleve regularly received her most intimate friends every forenoon in her so-called "little" salon. It was a large, gorgeous room, which Percier and Fontaine had lately redecorated with blue silk coverings for the walls and with gilded lambrequins. The furniture, all new and in the splendid style of the Empire, was also richly gilded and covered with blue brocaded silk. The curtains at the large windows were also of blue brocade, embroidered with golden bees and branches of laurel.

After the return from Tilsit, and ever since Talleyrand was elected Vice-Grand Electeur, and, as such, was one of the great dignitaries of the country, both Murat and his wife had plainly made great efforts to gain his friendship and intimate acquaintance. The Prince of Bénévent, as Talleyrand was known, was always affable; but he preserved, even in his relation to the Emperor's own family, his usual smooth, impenetrable manner, which often appeared a little careless. He had always treated Murat in-

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differently—in accordance with the manner with which Napoleon himself treated him. It would also be wrong to say that Murat felt himself especially attracted to Talleyrand; but his wife, the Princess, by whom he was entirely guided, in spite of his frequent brutality toward her, never tired of explaining to him how important it was for their plans to have Talleyrand on their side. He was the only one, as far as foreign politics was concerned, who had any influence at all with Napoleon.

On the other hand, Caroline always won from Talleyrand not only the homage due her as sister of the Emperor, but also his sincere admiration for her as a very beautiful woman. They agreed well whenever they met, and they found a deal of amusement in bargaining with each other for the crowns of Europe. Each understood the other thoroughly, and each played the game with great gusto—as a joke, of course.

On the morning following the ball, his Highness, the Prince of Bénévent, was calling upon her Highness, the Duchess of Berg and Cleve. The clear, sharp light of the September day, reflected in bluish tints from the hangings and

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furniture, could not dim the incomparable freshness of the Princess, who was arrayed in an Oriental costume and a loose jacket of rose-colored velvet; in fact, she looked quite as charming as she did the evening before at the ball. She sat now with both elbows resting upon the little bronze-trimmed table, which stood beside her lounge, and played carelessly with her rings.

"The Grand Duke complains about 'your Highness,'" she said, smilingly, as she looked up at Talleyrand. "He insists . . ."

"That Monsieur de Talleyrand '*ne veut pas qué jé sois roué!*'" interrupted Talleyrand, with a jolly imitation of Murat's voice and his southern accent.

The Princess involuntarily drew her rounded chin in a little. But she did not think it advisable to show that she thought he had gone too far, so she shrugged her shoulders with a smile.

"Yes, dear Prince, he says so, and it seems that he is not so very much mistaken. . . . But you, who have influence with his Majesty . . . why do you oppose our wishes, which are only in accordance with those of the people of Poland?"

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“Your Imperial Highness, it is a little difficult to speak about these things—sincerely—without, at the same time, hurting your tenderest and holiest feelings.” He was silent.

“Ah,” said the Princess, dryly, “when one speaks to me about business, I always make my feelings, even the holy ones, secondary. It is my duty, as Duchess. You were going to say? . . .”

“I would but say” — Talleyrand slowly opened the cameo lid of his magnificent snuff-box, and held the pinch between his fingers for a long time—“I would but say that there are, unfortunately, persons who think that your superior consort, who is so incomparable when it comes to bravery, is not among those who are most capable of ruling the affairs of the country.”

Caroline had expected this objection. She was thankful that he had spoken so openly, and she leaned gracefully over the little table as she looked at Talleyrand with a long, questioning glance.

“But there are others who do understand it. You know that my husband is always open to well-meant advice which I, from time to time,

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am able to give him. And I, for my part, do appreciate the friendship of which one of the most superior and highly trusted men of the country pleases to consider me worthy. . . .”

The Princess made a pause, letting her eyes rest on Talleyrand's. Then she smiled, and, extending her hand to him over the table, said:

“Monsieur de Talleyrand, I am sincerely thankful for your confidence in me !”

Talleyrand bent low over the charming little hand, which he kissed.

At this moment the chamberlain introduced a new guest: “His Majesty, the Austrian Emperor's new Ambassador, Herr von Metternich !”

The elegant young aristocrat stepped in with graceful dignity. As he approached the Princess, who had risen, he made, with natural ease, all the ballet-like courtesies dictated by the French etiquette. Caroline smiled graciously as she extended her hand and pointed to a seat.

Talleyrand remained but a few moments. As he went out, he met General Junot at the door.

“My dear Governor of Paris,” the Princess exclaimed, as she showed him a seat a little farther away than Metternich's and spoke with-

The Governor's Wife

out looking at him, busying herself with a bottle of perfume which stood on the table before her, "it is a rare honor to see you! To what am I to-day indebted for the pleasure of your visit?"

"I came to make your Imperial Highness my parting visit—here, at Élysée. In a few days—as soon as I have escorted their Majesties to Fontainebleau—the Emperor wishes me to depart for my post in the army."

"So soon?" Caroline stared at him with her large, dark eyes. "I thought that we should at least have the pleasure of your company during the hunting season. It must have been quite suddenly that my brother came to this decision. Perhaps, after the ball, last night . . ." She stopped, bit her lip, and glanced involuntarily at Metternich, as though she were afraid that she had said too much.

"I do not know when his Majesty made this decision, but I have long been prepared for this departure." It was apparent that Junot did not fully understand the Princess' words. He glanced at the Austrian, to see if it were not his intention to depart.

Metternich, well acquainted with the gossip

The Governor's Wife

of the court, made a gesture as though to rise; but the Princess held him back with a glance which could not be misunderstood as she, at the same time, turned again to the Governor of Paris.

"It looks almost as though he wishes to get rid of you," she said, laughing mischievously. "Apropos, may I be allowed to compliment you? Madame Junot was bewitching at my ball last night. She was very generally admired."

Junot knew the Duchess of Berg so well that he instantly divined what she meant; she was trying to divert his attention from herself by making him jealous of the Emperor's attentions to Laurette. At the same time she insinuated to this strange diplomat, whom she plainly enough was trying to win, a different reason for this departure to Bayonne from the one which, according to gossip, was supposed to be the most decisive: a momentary exile, as punishment for a too great intimacy with a certain Imperial Princess. Junot's face reddened deeply with anger, and he could not speak.

The Princess was cruelly courageous, for she knew, to a dot, what she wanted and what she

The Governor's Wife

was doing. But for once she was scared, knowing, as she did, Junot's wild impetuosity, and perceiving from the expression of his face how deeply he felt her thrust. She closed her eyes for a second, anxious for his next word, at the same time crushing the little smelling-salt box which hung at her belt.

Metternich stroked one of his fingers over the gold band on his three-cornered hat as he said slowly, with a slight bow toward Junot:

"My dear General, may I be permitted to be of the same opinion? With the exception of our gracious hostess, Madame Junot was, without doubt, the lady who was most admired at the ball last night."

This compliment, spoken by Metternich in an indifferent tone of voice, stopped the passionate answer which already trembled upon Junot's lips, and gave him that cooling douche of calmness which leaves reason uppermost and in control. He received the compliment in silence, but with a polite bow.

The Princess now wished that Metternich, whom she had detained with all her power, should go. When she realized the impression her behavior had made upon Junot, the woman

The Governor's Wife

in her awoke; she had been his mistress, she had loved him—yes, it seemed to her at this moment as though she loved him still! When she saw him, so proud, so self-controlled and manly, she could not bear the thought that they should part in this manner.

Junot leaned back in his chair in a nonchalant manner, his head held proudly and outlined superbly against his loosely hanging dolman. To the Princess, covertly watching him, the white scar on his temple became more marked—the scar of which he was so proud. In her innermost soul she already suspected the contempt and coldness which now was following his anger against her, and, Imperial and Royal Princess though she was, she would have thrown herself on her knees before her lover had not Herr von Metternich been present. She longed for his angry and upbraiding words, and once more for the mastery he had exercised.

No wonder, then, that Princess Caroline breathed heavily and with difficulty; that she pressed her hand against her heart, while the flush on her cheeks slowly increased and spread. For some moments no one spoke. The Governor arose to go.

The Governor's Wife

“Your Imperial Highness !” He bowed with correct respectfulness before the Princess.

Caroline arose.

“Dear Junot,” she said, in a low voice, “I am sorry that you must depart so soon. . . .” She searched for words while she graciously followed him a few steps. “We shall meet again—if not before, then at Fontaineblau—shall we not ?”

Junot made another bow, in answer to the glance which the Princess, unnoticed by Metternich, sent him. Then he left her presence, and walked rapidly through the anteroom, scarcely acknowledging the salutes of the bowing cavaliers.

Princess Caroline talked for a long time with Herr von Metternich, while the cavaliers in the anteroom drew their own conclusions from the unusual incidents of the morning.

XV

Ici (à Paris) seulement de tous les lieux de la terre les femmes méritent de tenir le gouvernail . . . Une femme a besoin de six mois de Paris pour connaître ce qui lui est dû, est quel est son empire.

NAPOLÉON

(Correspondance de l'Empereur).

Il fallait pour lui résister qu'une femme aimât ailleurs, car il n'est pas de raison, il n'est pas de vertu à l'épreuve d'une semblable séduction.

Mme. JUNOT

(de Napoléon).



“HERE is madame?” demanded the Governor of Paris, as he opened the door to his wife's waiting-room.

“Madame, monsieur? . . . Madame is just receiving his Excellence, the Grand Marshal,” replied the lackey, rising sleepily from his dinner nap.

“That is good,” said the Governor of Paris, moving impatiently and quickly through the room to her reception-room.

In the chair at her desk sat Laurette. Her elbow rested against the golden lyre on the

The Governor's Wife

back of the chair, and her face, in charming silhouette against the strong light from the window, was turned with interest toward Duroc, who was slowly walking up and down the room, when her husband abruptly stepped through the door, dark as a thunder-cloud. She peeped up at him in surprise. But without speaking Junot flung himself upon a chair by the window, nodding indifferently to Duroc.

“For God’s sake, Junot,” they both cried, “what is the matter?”

“Ah, nothing!” But immediately after he exclaimed, impetuously:

“Duroc may just as well hear it. Tell me, Laurette, what in the world is it”—he arose and stepped to his wife—“what is it that people are saying about you—and—about *him*?”

They both knew that when Junot said “him,” with that accentuation, he meant Napoleon.

“About me and the Emperor?” Laurette began to laugh. “My goodness! Here is Duroc, and he was just telling me the most touching stories about Napoleon and a certain Madame Walewski. And in the Tuileries they

The Governor's Wife

chatter constantly about his attentions to Madame Gazani! What are they now saying about me in Paris? . . . Napoleon's empire is Europe, but I did not think his heart was so roomy."

Junot was silent; but he noticed the glance which his wife gave Duroc, and he felt convinced, at that same moment, that they had not devoted all their conversation to the Polish Countess whom she had mentioned.

Duroc drew near Madame Junot and smilingly shook his finger at her. "But, madame, I thought you so discreet that I might entrust to you the state secret which I confided to you. But quite apart from the fact that you have lost my secret, you should not be so sure that Madame Walewski does not interest him any longer. She was in high favor at Warsaw and Finkenstein, but . . ." He shrugged his shoulders. "She was too monotonous, too meek—no charm, no esprit! She did not understand how to amuse him sufficiently, and she bothered him with politics. Besides, she was not a Parisienne—only a Frenchwoman could have completely enthralled the Emperor."

The Governor's Wife

“And now, perhaps, he has found one who can enthral him!” interrupted Junot, ironically.

Duroc turned toward him. “No, my friend, I do not believe that possible now. Since the Emperor ceased to care for Josephine, he has loved but once. That was during the Consulate. Now—now Napoleon has but one true love—Francee !”

“Yes, that all sounds very pretty,” said Junot, dryly. He bent forward and took his wife firmly by the arm as he forced her to look up at him. “Have you more confidence in Duroc than in me, Laurette?” he asked, tenderly upbraiding her.

“Confidence? I have nothing to confide to any one. Dear me, I suppose it will end by their saying that Duroc is my lover !”

“Madame” (Duroc laid his hand on his heart), “I have never dared to aim so high; but may I now hope, when Junot has departed . . .”

They all laughed. Junot placed his arm around his wife's waist, and extended the other hand to his friend.

“I know it is folly,” he said, still laughing.

The Governor's Wife

"I am a fool to take it so to heart; but people must not comment upon my Laure! Take good care of her, Duroc, while I am away."

"You had better entrust her to some one else," laughed Duroc. "As you have heard, I am not to be trusted. Apply to another of madame's admirers—Murat, for example!"

The Governor reddened to the roots of his hair. Without saying a word, he drew his arm away from his wife's waist, and walked slowly out of the room.

"Duroc, how could you?" Madame Junot passed him, blamingly, and started to follow her husband.

"I beg of you, madame . . . I give you my word of honor that I had no other thought with my words!" But now, in his anxiety, he grasped her hand and held her almost forcibly back, while he lowered his voice. "May I give you some good advice? Do not follow him; let him alone. A wife ought not to see her husband blush."

Madame Junot smiled ironically, without answering. Duroc bent down with respect and kissed the strong little hand which tried to tear itself away.

The Governor's Wife

“And now,” he said, slowly, as he carefully led her back to her seat, her hand still in his, “tell me what you were going to say when your husband came in. You have often called me your brother—consider me as such now.”

Duroc looked devotedly at her and inquired:

“Pray, how is it that you have never before told me about this old story from Malmaison? . . .”

“Ah!” (she looked down as she sat, and turned the rings on her fingers) “it did not amount to much, and then came the stay at the camp in Boulogne and our departure to Portugal, and then . . . I have scarcely seen the Emperor until now.”

“And now?”

Madame Junot smiled, and shrugged her shoulders. “I have only told you the beginning of the story: how he used to come into my room and read his mail every morning at four o’clock . . . That was compromising, was it not, with all those papers on the floor marked ‘To the First Consul, personal—to him alone’? Almost a whole week passed in this manner.”

“And didn’t he say very much?”

The Governor's Wife

“Yes, he talked a good deal—you know how sentimental and how ironical he can be at the same time. So, naturally enough, I never really knew what he meant. And whenever he left me he would pinch my nose and ruffle my hair.”

“But Junot?”

“Junot! He commanded Paris then, and did not know a word of it; Josephine was in Plombières, as you remember; and you?—you were far away, somewhere in Lorraine. Madame Louis? Well, I was so young I was too bashful to say anything to Madame Louis. But she understood it all, just the same.”

Duroc sighed. He often did that when the talk was about Hortense.

“Then Junot dined at Malmaison one evening. He was to go back the same evening—you know the Commander of Paris is never allowed to leave his post. But, yes, I got him up to my room to say good-night—and of course I did not let him go!” she said, quickly, and with superiority. “But when I heard Bonaparte come to my door in the morning, then . . . I am not easily frightened, but then I wished I were hundreds of miles away.”

The Governor's Wife

“Did he say anything—the First Consul?”

“He looked at me, and then he smiled. And such a smile! He saw through it immediately; then he became angry, and mocked me because I had been afraid.”

“But Junot, Junot? . . . What did he say when he saw Bonaparte in your room?”

“He only laughed. Not a suspicion ever occurred to him—at that time! You know well enough his idea of friendship and the sacred ties that bind friends.”

“But did he not think Napoleon’s presence peculiar?” asked Duroc, doubtfully.

“Ah, at that time! . . . We had as good as no etiquette, and the First Consul said that he had promised to wake me for the hunt. Besides, he commenced to upbraid Junot at once because he had remained away from his post without permission. He is equal to all emergencies.”

“Do you think that he was angry with you?” Duroc arose and walked up to her.

“Yes. And he would have despised me had it been different. He did not care for me even then, little as he does now!”

They were both silent for a few moments.

The Governor's Wife

Then Madame Junot said, suddenly, as she laid both hands upon Duroc's breast:

"Duroc, my friend, tell me honestly—it has always worried me, and I have never dared to speak to any one about it—do you think that it could have been for such an incident as this . . . that it was my fault that Junot was not made a Marshal at the Coronation?"

"But, madame!" exclaimed Duroc, deprecatingly.

"Ah, I know what you will say . . ." She let her arms drop and turned half around. "But he is not always just—he has never been so," she continued, sighing.

"Madame Junot, you must not think such things. You are misjudging the Emperor greatly," said Duroc, sternly.

She threw her head back, and again looked up defiantly with her large brown eyes.

"Because I say that he is not always just? Ah! read his bulletins of last winter, and then speak with Lannes and Ney! You know his 'justice' as well as I—yes, a thousand times better."

Duroc smiled, and again caught the small, restless hands.

The Governor's Wife

“Now, for the first time, I realize that the Emperor is right: you are, indeed, the greatest rebel in his kingdom, Madame Laurette !”

“I? I who, at this moment, would give him my life if he demanded it in the name of France !”

“He knows that, well.”

“Yes, he knows that ! . . . Ah, Duroc, admit that my position is really difficult. I dare not hurt him for Junot's sake ; on the other hand, I cannot confide in Junot. You know how he is—‘The Tempest,’ as you all call him—he fears nothing; and he would immediately demand an explanation from the Emperor himself. But his position is already so compromised. . . . Ah, I dare not think of it !”

“For God's sake !” exclaimed Duroc, now frightened. “He is a hothead, a daredevil ! . . . And you”—he bent down over her as he turned her face toward his, with brotherly tenderness—“you love him, my friend !”

Laurette looked up. Her beautiful eyes beamed with a moist gleam. She smilingly laid her hand upon Duroc's lips.

“He is his friend's best friend and his own worst enemy !” she said, with a proud woman's

The Governor's Wife

warmth and admiration for her loved one's daring and knightly unselfishness. "Even the Emperor, should he be in danger, would turn to Junot again, as he did at Marseilles. And you—and I—I . . ." She covered her face with both hands.

Duroc walked a step backward ; he bowed low and respectfully.

"Madame ! My friend ! . . . Now go to your husband."

Every evening her Majesty held her *cercle* in the Tuileries. In this, all those who had different grades of *les entrées*, which meant the Princes and Princesses of the imperial family, the foreign noblemen who were in Paris, the Marshals, Ministers, dignitaries and high officials of the country, and most of the military and civil court functionaries—all these were present, with ladies, without special invitation. Those who had a right to these evenings walked through the anteroom and knocked, without further ceremony, at the door to the salon. The chamberlain in attendance announced them, and the Emperor himself said :

"Come in !"

The Governor's Wife

A lady would quietly sit down, after she had made her obeisances, to which usually not much attention was paid. A gentleman placed himself just as quietly along the wall by the side of those who had come before him. The Emperor, who always liked to be in action, walked up and down the room, as a rule, stopping to talk to one or another, or sometimes to himself, engrossed in one of those long monologues which he loved and often preferred to conversation with others. The Empress was almost always too engrossed with checkers, a game of which she was a master, playing with one or another of the gentlemen whom she had selected beforehand for her opponent.

The ladies who were not otherwise engaged played lotto in the adjoining salon. The gentlemen would converse among themselves, while they anxiously waited for the Emperor to favor one or another of them. This happened very seldom, however, as he preferred to talk with the ladies at these evening parties.

Scarcely had the Governor's wife entered and taken her seat, when his Majesty observed her and directed his steps toward the corner where she sat.

The Governor's Wife

Meanwhile people began to whisper, in earnest, that the Governor's wife unquestionably was on the royal road to *la haute faveur*.

"How is the boy, my godson that is to be, Madame Junot?" He pinched her ear. "Now I shall have two little Junots to look out for. Apropos, Madame Laurette, whom have you thought of for godmother?"

"Her Majesty, the Empress, I hope . . ."

Napoleon turned on her that searching, penetrating glance which she now knew so well.

"The Empress? Yes? But why not my mother?" Their glances met; they were both silent. Then she said, with decision:

"With your permission, Sire, and if her Majesty does not object, I wish that it be the Empress."

Napoleon smiled almost unnoticeably, with a slight shrug of the shoulders.

"As you wish it, Madame Junot. You may speak to Josephine about it."

Madame Junot understood both the smile and the shrug of the shoulders, which brought the conversation to a sudden close. "Poor Josephine!" she thought, as she watched the Emperor move silently away. "I am afraid I have

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been a poor diplomat ; but no one shall say that I have left the sinking ship."

As a special favor, before his nearing departure, the Empress invited Junot to a game of checkers. She bent lower over the checker-board as she said, softly:

"His Majesty now occupies himself very much with Madame Junot. Have you noticed it?"

Junot smiled. His attention had already been called to this by others.

Josephine looked up, her beautiful mild eyes gleaming with unusual earnestness under the strongly painted brow.

"And you are going away, Junot?"

"Yes, your Majesty, in a few days. The army awaits me." He spoke quietly.

"You—you are not a little anxious about this state of affairs?"

This time Junot laughed aloud, for he knew how nervous and suspicious Josephine had become of late, on account of rumors and threats of divorce which constantly rang in her ears. If the Emperor looked twice at the same woman she became restless and jealous.

The Governor's Wife

"Your Majesty," he said, as he bent over her hand (she was just moving a piece on the board), "my confidence in his Majesty is, in every way, unbounded."

The old circle, as a relic of the simple ways of the Directorate and the Consulate, still preserved a certain off-hand manner toward the Empress when her husband was not present; and Junot, especially since their mutual journey to Italy in '96, when he and Josephine for a whole month occupied the same coach, always addressed her with frank directness.

"Should all of his Majesty's generals become 'anxious' upon departing from home, when it pleased him to send them to war, discipline in our army would soon be at an end."

Josephine forced a smile upon her tightly pressed lips as she replied :

"You can understand, dear Junot, that I am but joking. I wished only to know whether you had also heard this absurd gossip."

Their glances again met; hers was sad and restless. He noticed how old her face had grown (the thickly applied paint could not hide it any longer), and how sunken was the fine mouth. Then he felt pity for this woman whom

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he had always despised, and had always considered unworthy of her proud position. The moment was now approaching, judging from all indications, which he and so many others of Napoleon's war-fellows longed for—the moment for the divorce from a sterile and unfaithful wife. And now, for the first time, it dawned upon him that this, Napoleon's divorce from Josephine, also meant divorce from all the old times: from the memories of Italy, of Egypt, and the Consulate—from all the period which she represented. Over the gracefully bowed head of the Empress he could see the young Queen of Westphalia at the other end of the salon. She was dignified, foreign, and correct to her fingertips, as with her stereotyped, meaningless smile she accepted the compliments of the French gentlemen whose names she tried in vain to remember. . . .

The game was finished. The Governor of Paris arose and bowed deeply. As the Empress looked up at him with her beautiful glance, so touchingly mild when she wished it, and at parting quietly bowed her head with the tender, cordial grace which she, though old and *passée*, still preserved, Junot suddenly realized how

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much they all would lose with Josephine. Just as she was—and she had her faults—so would she always be: the tie between Napoleon and his past; she alone was “Madame Bonaparte,” mistress of Malmaison; it was she alone who had once been called by the soldiers of the Italian army, “*Notre Dames des Victoires*.”

XVI

J'aime le pouvoir, moi, mais c'est en artiste que j'aime. Je l'aime comme un musicien aime son violon, je l'aime pour en tirer des sons, des accords, des harmonies.

NAPOLÉON.

Il disait souvent que l'homme vraiment politique sait calculer jusqu'aux moindres profits qu'il peut faire des défauts.

Mme. DE RÉMUSAT
(de l'Empereur).



ABOUT the middle of September the whole elaborate court moved to Fontainebleau. Here, at this magnificent and favorite castle, Napoleon had decided to celebrate the grand festivities which he had planned long ago in honor of the King of Westphalia's wedding, and as a splendid ending to the agreement at Tilsit. He wanted to give the French court an opportunity to again assert itself as the foremost in the world—such as it had been under Louis XIV.

Nearly all of the imperial family made their residence at Fontainebleau with their Majesties.

The Governor's Wife

There came the newly married King and Queen, Napoleon's mother, Queen Julia of Naples, the Queen of Holland, the Grand Duke and Duchesse of Berg, Prince and Princess of Baden, and Princess Pauline. The Emperor had, besides, invited all the foreign ambassadors who, after peace was declared, had hurried to Paris. He had also gathered around him the great dignitaries of his country and its foremost men: the Prince of Neufchâtel, the Prince of Bénévent, most of the marshals, high officials, and Ministers, with their families. Before he should stretch out his hand in earnest after a new Western crown, he would rest here for a moment in the heart of old France, surrounded by his proud court: by friends whom he had made powerful, and by enemies whom he had conquered.

He had his private apartments arranged, as far as possible, in the same manner in all of his castles as they were in the Tuileries, and the furniture, which had been made after the same models, was also similarly arranged. In this way, by "feeling at home," he did not waste time. The articles needed for his work and comfort were carried on all his journeys in large, practically arranged *nécessaires*, so that wher-

The Governor's Wife

ever he had his headquarters—be it in a castle or in a bivouac—he could always have about him his writing-table, charts, and other materials arranged in the special manner which he had found most convenient and useful.

The secretary and the keeper of his portfolio had immediately assisted each other in getting everything arranged “as usual” in the large room overlooking the orangerie. This he had selected for his workroom, and now—a couple of hours after his arrival—he was walking to and fro, from one corner of the room to the other, engrossed in one of his endless dictations, while Meneval, to whom it was entirely immaterial whether he wrote his quick, foreshortened signs in the Tuileries or at Fontainebleau, piled one sheet after the other upon the table in front of him.

The Emperor was in excellent humor to-day. He often stopped dictating to pick at random a book from the shelf. He would open at a tragedy by Corneille, and commence to recite; or he would hum, out of tune, a melody or an old refrain from an operetta which had been popular during the Directorate. He smiled to himself as he swayed to and fro with his hands behind him,

The Governor's Wife

indifferent to the fact that he was singing a street song:

“Marat, du peuple le vengeur . . .”

Suddenly he sat down upon the arm of Meneval's chair, put his hand out after the snuff-box that lay upon the table, and slowly took a pinch of snuff.

“Lay your pen away, Meneval”—he patted him on the cheek. “Let us chat a little, my friend.”

“Your Majesty, I am afraid I shall forget . . .”

“Oh, nonsense; you have a memory like a horse! Here at Fontainebleau we really must rest a little—you, as well as I—for the sake of a change! You too must have your share in the pleasures of life, Meneval.”

“But, sire,” interrupted the secretary, completely perplexed, “how in the world can I take time for pleasure and play, when I realize that you are working steadily and need me all the time?”

The Emperor laughed aloud. “Bah! When one wishes, one can find time for everything—even for love intrigues, though I must confess they do take a confounded lot of time!”

The Governor's Wife

He again walked over the floor, still smiling and humming. Suddenly he stopped, with his thumbs stuck into his vest-pockets, and said, in an entirely changed voice:

“Have you the despatch ready for Bernadotte? To-day a courier goes to Hamburg. We must make hay while the sun shines. Ah, Mr. Canning; he should know what a favor he has done me! Now is the time to give them their death-blow, dear Meneval. England has never had such mediocre Ministers as at the present. Public opinion, which was once so hard for me thoroughly to get the support of, is at last with me on account of the bombardment of Copenhagen. That act of the English has changed me in their eyes from a “tyrant” to a “redeemer.” . . . Every harbor from St. Petersburg to the Gulf of Taranto shall be closed. They will thank me for my continental blockade. Lisbon, you say?” (Meneval had not said a word, he only looked up.) “As to Lisbon, I can trust Junot. He usually accomplishes what he sets out to do; he must answer for Lisbon!”

He rang the bell forcibly. The lackey who was always in attendance outside the door, entered.

The Governor's Wife

“Send a messenger to the Governor of Paris. I wish to speak with him at once.”

While the Emperor was waiting for Junot, he continued his silent wandering about the room. Here, within these four walls which he called his workroom, he enjoyed to the fullest extent the reality of his power. To him the pomp and glitter of his position were but the attendant circumstances of royalty—the supplement of power. On the other hand, here alone in his study he celebrated his greatest triumphs.

Never before had his brain been so productive of gigantic plans as now, after he had found his long-sought alliances at Tilsit; never before had it seemed to him that the way was so open for his unbounded ambition. Europe—this suspicious, shy, conservative Europe, which he had courted so long—threw itself at last into his arms. He knew, through Savary, that Alexander and Romanzoff, who were now more anxious than ever to please him, had decided to break off all connection with the cabinet at London. Metternich and the Grand Duke of Würzburg had already as good as decided to accept the treaty about which they had long

The Governor's Wife

negotiated, in which Austria—suppressed and tempted by his clever traps—at last openly broke with England and definitely accepted his continental policy. On his table lay despatches from King Frederick William, with humble assurances of Prussia's readiness to conclude with France an offensive and defensive alliance; and at last Denmark, the Mistress of the Sound, who had kept herself coyly at a distance, and had never ceased to boast of her neutrality, now—thanks to England's brutal tactics at Copenhagen—she had no other choice than to throw herself kindly into his arms, ready to do his bidding, if she might avenge the insult to her capital and the loss of her fleet.

Almost all Europe was at Napoleon's feet, and he was but waiting for new despatches from Lisbon to break with Portugal and to hand her ambassador his passports. Only a few days more, and Junot should receive his final and secret instructions.

The Emperor asked the Governor of Paris into his workroom—something which had scarcely happened since the time of the Consulate. He begged Junot to be seated in one of the few chairs which stood here and there alongside the

The Governor's Wife

walls, while he himself straddled another chair, his chin resting upon the back of it.

"Now, my dear Governor of Paris, are you not a little curious to know why I send you to Bayonne?"

"No, Sire. You have said—and, besides, I have heard it repeated by others—that you wish to get rid of me at any price," said Junot, with a smile.

The Emperor smiled also, and swayed to and fro on his chair.

"And you really believe that I am childish enough to let myself be moved by personal reasons when an affair concerns the state? That may have been possible in the days of the ancient régime." He shook his head several times. "Ah, no; I have outgrown that! But you, Junot—who, in spite of all your stupidities, are a clever fellow—you don't believe it either."

"No, your Majesty," said Junot, sincerely, "no longer."

"You remember, perhaps, that you were once Ambassador to Portugal?"

Junot laughed. Napoleon had now completely won him over by his good humor.

"And that you so impressed the Prince of

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Brazil with your hussar uniform that you almost made a revolution in the palace, or, rather, a wardrobe revolution? I believe that he almost sacrificed his braid of hair . . .”

“But, Sire, where in the world do you get that from?” exclaimed Junot, laughing.

“Your wife told it to Josephine. Ah, I know everything. . . . Tell me—do you believe that you can once more astonish his Highness with your hussar uniform and 26,000 men at your heels?”

“With 26,000 men!—yes, sire, I believe I can.”

“Good.” The Emperor nodded. “They are now at Bayonne. Now you know what the ‘Observation Army of the Gironde’ is for, and why I select you, who know Portugal so well, for its leader.”

Junot bowed silently. His heart beat with joy and expectation.

“I tell you this now, so that you can make your plans. Sealed orders are good enough, but—you know I trust you. . . . For you I have reserved the honor of depriving England of her last friend on the Continent; I send you to battle with my worst enemy. Now, Junot,

The Governor's Wife

you have an opportunity to avenge your captivity in Egypt."

"Sire," said General Junot, solemnly, as he arose and bent low over the Emperor's extended hand, "if passionate devotion and undaunted bravery can accomplish what you desire, then we must succeed."

Napoleon, who had also risen, was touched by Junot's words, and pressed the hand which so eagerly clutched his.

"There, you see! One should never misjudge an old friend, Junot," said he, smiling in his beguiling manner.

Junot had large tears in his eyes; he laid the Emperor's hand upon his heart.

"Your Majesty!" he murmured.

"Now, there, old friend. . . . And now you are responsible for the closing of Oporto and Lisbon to the English before Christmas. Soon—soon, my friend—the house of Braganza shall have ceased to reign!"

But it seemed as though Napoleon regretted that he had disclosed one of his most secret thoughts; he bit his lips, turned on his heel, and walked to the window. Junot, as if enchanted, rested his glance in worship on the Emperor's

The Governor's Wife

proud profile, which was sharply drawn upon the window. His wife was right: this man was his god, he really knew no other.

"You shall, later on, get more detailed instructions," continued the Emperor, in a more business-like tone, as he strolled up and down between Meneval's writing-table and Junot, who stood immovable in his corner, with both hands upon the hilt of his sword. "In a week you will be at Bayonne, and next month, I think, you can cross the Pyrenees. In regard to Spain you will get further orders. Show, now, that you have been a diplomat! You know I have a lucky hand; he whom I select for a purpose is usually successful.

"You see," continued the Emperor slowly, again entirely confidential to his friend, "Spain is a ticklish point; she causes me a deal of trouble. I must support Spain; she is sinking deeper and deeper, and she will soon be of no more use to us. We must, however, profit by her resources . . .

"But how you look at me, Junot!" He stopped in front of him, with both hands behind his back. "You think I am raving, as in Egypt, at the St. Jean d'Arc, don't you?"

The Governor's Wife

"Sire," exclaimed Junot, as he looked into his eyes, "you know that ever since we two first met at the sansculotte battery at Toulon I have believed in you, if anybody has."

"You have a cause!" He nodded. "You were really the first one who voluntarily tied his fate to mine. But still," he lifted his head, and nodded more slowly—"still we are far from the goal."

Junot smiled proudly, and was happy under the Emperor's strong, beaming glance.

"Then I can surely trust you." He passed his hand over Junot's bent head and smiled suddenly. "The old scar is still there, I can feel it. . . . My friend, in the battles which now await you, I need scarcely beg you to remember Arcole and Lonato."

"My General! my Emperor! . . ."

"There, now, Junot. . . . You are too forcible, too impetuous, my old friend. But you know now what your Emperor expects of you. One thing more" (Junot had already neared the door): "you understand that what I have told you must not be disclosed to any one."

"Your Majesty!" exclaimed Junot, indignantly.

The Governor's Wife

“Yes, yes . . . I know, I know ; but your wife is a clever little imp, and you are a bit weak in regard to her. I only warn you ; be careful !”

Junot bowed again, with his hand on his heart, and then left the room, the Emperor's smiling glance following him.

XVII

J'ai toujours aimé l'analyse, et si je devenais sérieusement amoureux, je décomposerais mon amour pièce à pièce.

NAPOLÉON.

Il faut toujours tenir nos vanités en haleine à nous autres, la sévérité du gouvernement républicain vous eût ennuyé à mort.

NAPOLÉON.



THIS MAJESTY breakfasted early on the morning of the hunt; in fact, he had long been busily engaged when the hunting cavalcade gathered in *la bour du Cheval-Blanc*. The ladies, in their fantastic costumes of the same color as that of the Princess to whose court they belonged, had already taken their places in the open carriages and a few were mounted when the Emperor, who always came last, descended the horseshoe stairs, accompanied by his suite.

The morning was misty and cool, and the roads were still soaked with the rain of the night; everything was in striking contrast to the gay cavalcade which shed its brilliancy on all sides.

The Governor's Wife

First came the hunters, then the carriages, and, last, the wagons with provisions and the service for the luncheon—cooks and servants following after. The Emperor rode for a time at the side of the carriage in which the Empress and his mother sat, his greeting to Josephine having been an indifferent one.

Under the clear and telling light of the morning sun Josephine did not show to advantage in a half Oriental costume which Napoleon had designed for her. Napoleon did not make any remarks about it, however; but, after speaking a few words to the ladies, he touched his hat, put spurs to his horse, and flew off with loose reins.

He did not hunt for the sake of the game. Sport did not amuse him any more than gambling, and he could not understand how any one could appreciate the miserable and quite imaginary results which they obtained. But hunting gave him an opportunity for vigorous bodily exercise in the time of peace, the only change which he cared for and considered useful. He liked to go away by himself and be alone; and with the exception of the stable-master, Jardin, who always followed him like a shadow at a respectful distance, he would roam around unat-

The Governor's Wife

tended in this ancient, memorable, forest which he loved so well, and here think out his most daring thoughts and dream his proudest dreams. Besides, these great hunting festivities appealed to his esthetic and aristocratic tastes. He liked to hear the horn ring out through the forest, the yelp of the hounds, and the rousing, jubilant "*Hallali*" when the deer fell. He liked to see his stately cavaliers rush past him on their fiery steeds, and perceive the ladies who, gaily and gracefully attired in their attractive costumes, presided at the merry luncheon under the trees. Such scenes reminded him of his youth, of the life in the field, of old times at Malmaison—of everything he liked to remember.

So now, without a thought as to the direction he had taken, the Emperor had neared the heights at Franchard. He stopped there a moment, listening to the hunt, the noise of which could be heard in the distance; he then gave his horse free rein, and at a furious speed rushed down the steep embankment. Down in the valley, sharply drawn against the white rocks which arose behind her, was a solitary lady on horseback. Her white mare reared with fright as the Emperor rushed toward them so unexpectedly.

The Governor's Wife

"Is it you?" called Napoleon to the lady. "Why in the world do you stop here alone, Madame Junot?" He rode breathlessly up to her.

"I was a little tired, and then. . . . Yes, I really do not know how it happened that the others escaped me. But they were all so strenuous in following the deer that I preferred to stop here and rest for a while—it is so beautiful here. . . ." She made a sweeping gesture with her hand to call his attention to the beautiful surroundings of the spot.

The sun, now in earnest, broke through the mist which, like a soft, torn veil, still hovered around the pointed tops of the rocks. Yet the Emperor did not look at the view, but watched the Governor's wife somewhat curiously. Jardin stopped at a little distance.

"It isn't at all your way to become 'tired,' " said he.

Madame Junot bent low over the mare's neck and patted it, while the Emperor continued to look at her with his peculiar, unmerciful glance. Her hunting costume was very becoming, decorated as it was with the colors of the Empress. The short tunic of purple velvet, embroidered

The Governor's Wife

with gold, fell gracefully down over a white silk skirt, which, for the sake of convenience, was slightly lifted at the side, so that the little boots of red velvet were visible. Around her waist was a broad red scarf, and on her head a black toque boldly turned up in front, with waving white plumes, under which her rich, dark hair rippled in a *mille boucles* coiffure. Her fresh beauty was magnificently emphasized by these strong, rich colors.

They slowly commenced—still followed by Jardin—to pick their way in silence among the rocks. As the road was especially bad, being wet and slippery, Napoleon frequently took hold of her horse's bit to guide the animal more surely.

“This reminds me of our youth, *Madame la Gouverneuse*. Yes, of course you are now old enough for one to speak about youth without danger of offense. I do not know whether your Grace remembers a certain *tête-à-tête* at the hunt at Butard?”

Madame Junot knew that the Emperor loved to surprise his friends as well as his enemies, but she was not at all prepared for this attack. In all the intervening years he had never as much as hinted at the events of that morning

The Governor's Wife

and at what had happened on the way to Butard.

"Of course, your Majesty," she answered, with an unsteadiness unusual for her. "How should I be able to forget one of the few times when I have had the honor of speaking with your Majesty?"

He stopped, eyed her closely, and smiled faintly. "How funny! You speak your lines so fluently and with perfectly correct accentuation. . . . Even Madame de Chevreuse is no greater actress than you!"

"You have made that remark often before, Sire," she answered, "but it has never pleased you to give me any reason for your opinion."

"I know no one—at least, no woman—who has opposed my will in every way, as you have," he continued, without wishing to listen to her.

"Of course, I dare not say that, your Majesty is unjust," she said, with tears in her eyes from vexation and nervousness; for quite apart from the difficulties and dangers of the moment, she was harassed by the thought of Junot's departure on the morrow, the anguish of which was already upon her.

His look now changed to a roguish glance,

The Governor's Wife

such as she had not seen since "their youth," as he expressed it.

"Unjust? Dare I again remind your Grace of the trip to Butard?"

Laurette laughed aloud, vastly relieved by the Emperor's good humor, and much diverted by the medley of emotions that followed. "Ah, that time!" she said. "Your Majesty puts me really quite at a loss by constantly coming back to the mysterious incident which, I must confess, I do not quite remember." She could not help looking at him secretly with a roguish glance from under her eyelashes, and this betrayed her. She was, however, quite herself again, and no longer awed by the impending conversation, which she knew must be decisive.

"Ah, ha, Madame Junot! Shall I help your memory a little? The little incident began when you took many unnecessary precautions against what you thought to be a criminal caprice of the First Consul." Still he did not succeed in ruffling her; but his sarcastic voice made her lose her patience, which never stretched very far. And when she became impatient or angry she easily forgot that she no longer spoke to General Bonaparte. She answered, impetuously:

The Governor's Wife

“Criminal! That is a word which you are adding yourself. But can you deny that such an act was a caprice?”

She looked earnestly at him with her beaming brown eyes. Their glances met.

“No,” he said, sternly. “Yes, perhaps, partly; it is difficult fully to analyze the feeling a man has for a woman. But I believe—peculiar as it may seem to both you and to me—that it really was a feeling of friendship. That is something which I seldom used to feel for ladies, but you . . . there is something about you which greatly attracts me. Mark well, I do not for a moment say that I love you, but . . . I believe we could have been very good friends, Madame Junot.”

“Friends, Sire!” she repeated, slowly and very earnestly. “It seems to me that . . .”

“Ah, I know what you would say,” he interrupted, impatiently. “Yes, just friends! You see, in my opinion friendship is impossible between men and women of our age, unless . . .” He shrugged his shoulders.

She did not answer, and he avoided looking at her as he continued, slowly:

“You were at that time but a mere child.

The Governor's Wife

You were a little conceited and headstrong, as you always have been. And then you made the mistake of considering as an offense to your honor that which was only—well, what shall I say?”

It appeared to Madame Junot that it would have been quite difficult to construe these repeated *tête-à-têtes* at her bedside at four o'clock in the morning in any other manner. She pondered a little as to how he would get out of it.

“At that time, madame, the First Consul offered his hand to you in friendship; he longed to have a clever, sweet friend. But that was long ago, Madame Laurette—long ago. Is it not so?”

“Yes, your Majesty, it certainly was very long ago. The surprise is that your Majesty still remembers it.”

“You do not sit badly on a horse, Madame Junot, considering that you have but ridden a few months. I remember when Junot swore that his little Sèvres doll should never be permitted to risk her precious life on the back of a horse—you see, I have a good memory!—and now he has taught you the art himself. Yes, we all change!”

The Governor's Wife

"It was my own special wish, Sire," answered Madame Junot, poutingly.

"Certainly." They walked their horses toward the rest of the party, Jardin behind them.

"Do you see how they stare at you? To-morrow a dozen anonymous letters will be written to Junot, saying that the Emperor at last has decided upon a '*maitresse en titre*.' Then he will turn around on the way to Bayonne, spur his best horses, and come back a-flying . . . Ah, I know Junot! What answer shall I make him then?"

"How do I know, Sire? How would it be possible for me to know what the Emperor had decided?"

"But you do know . . ."

"That he has not thought of Madame Junot. Yes, that I know, your Majesty."

The Emperor looked at her for a long time, and then burst out laughing aloud.

"You are a veritable little devil! To think of it! How could you guess that I really had not for a moment thought of Madame Junot?"

Queen Hortense was still seated in her carriage in the midst of the hunting party, and she held a brilliant group of cavaliers about her

The Governor's Wife

equipage. When the Emperor and Madame Junot joined the hunting party, Napoleon beckoned to the Governor of Paris, who, with hat in hand, was speaking to Queen Hortense.

"See here, Junot ! Here you have your wife again. She came within a hairbreadth of disappearing forever among the cliffs at Franchard—just like Eurydice !"

His Majesty dismounted and took his place at the table, which was already set. He turned to the Ambassador from Escorial, the Duke of Frias, and said, graciously :

"How does your Grace enjoy the hunt ? I do not suppose it much resembles those of his Catholic Majesty at Aranjuez ?"

The proud Spaniard bowed, looked up at the sky, and answered : "His Catholic Majesty, Sire, always lunches under a tent."

"I, however, prefer the sky," answered the Emperor, with superiority, as he turned around.

The sun was now shining brightly, and through the scant foliage there fell a warm, trembling light over the long table, around which the guests were already taking their places. The table was placed on the grass upon a portable wooden platform covered with a thin Aubusson

The Governor's Wife

carpet. The service was, in all details, entirely of silver, marked with the imperial monogram. Here in the woods, after an animated hunt, and now that everybody was hungry, it was almost impossible, in spite of the exertions of Monsieur de Ségurs and the Préfet, strictly to maintain the formal service which Napoleon always demanded. Here nature and old habits again held sway, here appeared reminiscences of the happy and graceful lack of form of the days of the Directorate and the Consulate. The Emperor did not comprehend it himself, but his court really never had a greater resemblance to the old French court, which he so much wished it to resemble, than at such functions as these, when all these brave men and merry, beautiful women, freed from the restraint of the still scarcely learned ceremony, gave themselves up to the vivacious sway of their Gallic natures.

That was why the hunt was considered the best of pleasures by all—even by those who did not take an active part in it. From the time they gathered in the morning, at the blast of the horn, until the *curée* in the evening, when the hounds fell over the prey in the gleam of the

The Governor's Wife

torches, there was nothing but gaiety and happiness the whole day long.

The Emperor sat at the head of the table ; slowly, almost caressingly, he let his eyes wander over the many guests. Among the gentlemen's green hunting costumes glittered the ladies' dresses—in white and purple, silver and lilac, rose and blue.

The knives and forks rattled against the silver plates, the wine sparkled as it flowed from the silver decanters into the crystal cups which ringingly touched each other, while laughter pealed from fresh lips. And midst all this noise and hum he could sometimes catch the words of compliments and quickly turned *repartée* in the clear, daring, French accents which he loved so much.

The Duke of Würzburg, the brother of Emperor Franz, gallantly entertained her Majesty the Empress with descriptions of a modern English park with which he intended to surround his new residence. Josephine, who understood a good deal about such things, was highly interested and gave him good advice. At last he also appealed to the Emperor, to hear his opinion on the subject.

The Governor's Wife

“An English park, you say?” The Emperor leaned back in his chair and clinched the hand which rested upon the table-cloth. “Ah, yes! But still I think that is a caprice most suitable for millionaires. . . . *My* English park, your Highness”—he made a sweeping movement of the hand—“you see right here. It is the forest around Fontainebleau.”

The Governor of Paris had not, during the whole day, attempted to converse with Princess Caroline, although many excellent opportunities had offered themselves, and he had caught several glances from her which plainly told him that he might do so. But when they all arose from the table, he happened, for a moment, to be near her lady in attendance, Mademoiselle de la Grange, whom he had noticed circling around him for some time. He had always disliked the flattering old schemer, although he had not hesitated to use her when he had occasion. Now, as she approached him, dressed in pink and silver, wearing the colors of the Princess, she was almost disgusting to him.

Mademoiselle de la Grange laid a long, bony finger on her painted lips and whispered :

“I know a lady who is very sorry about a cer-

The Governor's Wife

tain person's approaching departure. At the ball to-night she expects that he will find an opportunity to speak with her."

The Governor of Paris, after having won the affections of the Emperor's sister, now avoided her as much as possible. Two days before she had shown such unconcerned and selfish perfidy that he fairly hated her for it. It hurt his pride as a man that he met his rebuff in the presence of Metternich, whom every one was pointing to as his successor in her favor. It hurt him, too—more than he was willing to admit, even to himself—that, in the game she was playing, she threw him away as a worthless card at the first breath of censure for her folly.

The Emperor and the Empress partook of the dinner apart, while Duroc did *les honneurs* at his table for those of the royal guests who did not have their own establishments at Fontainebleau. After this function was over, the Emperor gave a ball in the Francis I. gallery, a grand old festival-hall now used a great deal more than it had been during *l'ancien régime*. The Emperor thought his young court showed to better advantage under those enormous chandeliers which hung from the artistically carved ceiling, among

The Governor's Wife

the prond, historic emblems on the long walls: the golden *F* alternating with salamanders, with paintings by Rosso, and with bold sculptures by Primaticcio.

In the evening, while on his usual rounds, the Emperor stopped for a moment, leaned against the monumental fireplace at one end of the hall, and looked down through the enormous rooms, where all in France who had aristocratic names, or beauty, or fame, took part in the quadrille. Then it was that he experienced the same feelings as when he reviewed the troops upon the battle-field after a victory. He refused no triumphs when they could enlarge his imperial prestige, whether they were won upon the polished floor of the festal hall at Fontainebleau, or upon the bloody meadows of Eylau.

Princess Pauline, on account of her poor health, did not dance, although she was always present at the festivals. She sat that night in a large chair in the middle of the room, the fairest of the fair, decked with her own diamonds as well as those of the house of Borghese. In her lap she held a rose, a ring, and a handkerchief, while, back of her chair, gracefully grouped, stood Princess Caroline, Madame de Canisy, and

The Governor's Wife

the Duchess of Chevreuse. The young Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Prince Murat, and General Junot knelt upon three pillows at her feet. Meantime, with great solemnity, the young ladies tied a soft silk veil before the eyes of the Princess, after they themselves had first been named as the ring, the rose, and the handkerchief. Blind, like Fortuna, Princess Pauline distributed the emblems to the three kneeling cavaliers. The Duke of Mecklenburg got the ring; he arose immediately and bowed to Madame de Canisy. Murat got the handkerchief, which represented the Duchess of Chevreuse, who, with an almost unnoticeable wrinkling of her fine little nose, decided to give him her hand while she fleetingly glanced at the Duke of Mecklenburg. Last of all, Junot received the rose. The Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleve haughtily placed her royal hand in the Governor's, while every one wondered whether Princess Pauline really had been as blind as she looked when she drew the lots.

The three couples solemnly took a few turns of the dance, and then gave way to others. The interest of the guests now concentrated upon the jealous little Queen of Westphalia, and they

The Governor's Wife

wondered whether she would allow her husband—one of the gentlemen kneeling before her—to dance with Princess Stephanie. The confusion and change of interest gave Junot and Caroline a chance, quite unnoticed, to exchange a few words with each other.

“Tell me,” whispered the Princess, “shall I not see you again before you go away?”

“I do not think so. That would be very unwise in our situation, as you no doubt realize as well as I,” answered Junot, softly.

“You are still angry with me on account of the . . . other day? . . .”

“Your great kindness, your Highness, has filled my soul with such gratitude that it would be impossible for me to feel angry toward you.”

The Princess bit her lip. She felt intuitively the hidden bitterness in this answer, and she looked up for the first time during their conversation. His eyes met hers with an expression which, in spite of its tender sentimentality, could not quite disguise the triumphant smile around his lips. The Princess tapped her foot impatiently upon the floor. She hated him for his proud, merciless sagacity, which laid as a weight upon her heart. She said, with emotion:

The Governor's Wife

"But you will write to me, my friend? . . ."

He laid his hand upon his heart. "Nothing, your Highness, will give me greater consolation in my loneliness."

The Princess looked questioningly at her lover. She knew him so well. She knew that if he once got his erratic and impetuous nature under control he would rise vastly her superior in irony and sarcasm. He was a good deal of a riddle to her to-night, and his treatment of her, she vaguely felt, was for some reason very humiliating.

"You should have every confidence in me," she said, quickly, and with greater earnestness. "Remember, Junot, if you are ever in need—remember that you have a true friend in me."

Junot, by way of answer, tenderly pressed the soft little hand that stole into his. This lingering hand-shake with which they parted expressed his last gallant and appreciative thanks to her for all that she had been to him.


XVIII

Nous ne pouvons nous aimer avec
passion et vivre parfaitement heureux.
Mais l'amour vaut bien la paix — n'est-
ce pas ?

Mme. JUNOT
(" Étienne Saulnier ").

L'avenir est à mépriser pour l'homme
qui a du courage.

NAPOLÉON
(Correspondance de l'Empereur).

T was about midnight when Madame Junot returned from the ball to the apartment which had been designated for her and her husband in one of the pavilions of the castle. Junot had not returned as yet. He wished to speak once more to his friend Duroc, this being almost impossible except at night, as the Grand Marshal was usually very busy.

She could not, however, understand what detained Junot so long. She saw him disappear with Duroc soon after the Emperor withdrew, and that was almost an hour before. They must have had a great deal to talk about.

She dismissed her maid, and, with her hands

The Governor's Wife

resting lightly on her hips, she strolled slowly to and fro through the large room, which was dimly lighted by two candles placed in front of the mirror over the mantel. As she drew near the mirror to straighten one of the candles, she lifted her dress a little, and put her dainty pink shoe against the grate, behind which the embers were slowly dying.

From sheer force of habit Madame Junot glanced indifferently into the mirror and examined her evening toilet. Meeting there her own innocent gaze, she bent involuntarily nearer to the glass and examined her face closely. "Ah, yes; why not? . . . his Majesty has good taste . . ." And for the hundredth time she thought of her chat with Napoleon. On his side, the encounter had been a half-masked attack by an incomparably superior tactician. On her side, she had boldly foiled his advances before he could accomplish his wish. They had for a moment stood eye to eye with crossed foils, like two skilled fencers. They had both dropped their weapons with full honors, and had parted with a smile and a compliment. But was the conflict settled by this combat? . . . Ah! the Emperor had many weapons in his arsenal, and,

The Governor's Wife

like an experienced victor, he would surely not suffer a half defeat. During the evening her glance had again met his for a second, and Napoleon smiled in a sarcastic and knowing way; but then that was when Junot was dancing with the Grand Duchess of Berg.

Out in the anteroom she heard her husband give some orders to the sleepy valet, and immediately after she greeted him at the open door.

“Ah, you are still awake, Laurette! I was almost afraid that you had retired.”

“No, I came home only a moment ago—I could not get away before.” And they walked side by side to his large traveling bag, which stood upon the table at the center of the room, all packed and arranged for his departure.

Junot laid his hat away, and stood unbuckling his sword, while Laurette absent-mindedly passed her fingers over the metal ornament on the bag. For a moment they were both silent.

“You know that I shall be obliged to drive from here at seven o'clock in the morning. I am compelled to be at Bayonne at the end of this week.”

“Yes. . . . Everything is ready, so far as I know. I heard you speak to Chapelle . . .”

The Governor's Wife

Junot then turned a little hesitatingly to his wife, and gently placed his arm around her waist.

“Laura!” . . .

She turned toward him, and, with passionate, uncontrollable anguish, she put both arms around his neck and threw herself upon his breast.

“Laurette! What is the matter, dearest? It is so unlike you to lose your courage.”

“Yes, yes; but do not mind that,” she sobbed, trying to control herself. He kissed her cheek and neck, and tried to sooth her. Then she suddenly lifted her head and bent far back, her hands still upon his shoulders, and said, stubbornly:

“Why am I so stupid? Why should you always be spared? . . . Yes, I am unhappy—you may just as well know it. I am desperate—almost beside myself with anxiety. . . .”

“Laurette, now listen to me. I swear to you that I never, never again . . . do you understand?”

“Ah, it is not that alone,” she interrupted him, impatiently, as she half turned away. “I know very well that such a promise does not last forever. It has been hard enough to endure that humiliation during this whole year.” And

The Governor's Wife

she sighed as she gazed absently at another scene on memory's page. "Ah, life is so hopelessly complicated—so difficult to live!"

"Pray, don't turn into a weeping philosopher, my pigeon," he said, gaily, with an attempt at joking. "Life—why, life is what fate makes it."

"Yes, you are right; and the Emperor, he is our fate—yours, and, therefore, mine."

"Laurette," he pushed her away from him, "why do you always speak in such a tone about him?"

"I speak only the truth!" she exclaimed impetuously, almost recklessly. "It has lately dawned more and more upon me that we are no longer the free and independent people we were some years ago, but merely dolls in his hands, souls at his mercy. Look around! It is not alone you and I, it is all of us. Take your own case as an example—think how you have been thrown from one anxiety to another, since he came home, without will or wish of your own, defenseless. . . . His anger is death, his smile life. His love—ah, whom does he love now?" . . .

Junot silently paced to and fro, while Laurette still stood at the table. She had turned toward

The Governor's Wife

him, with her hands behind her, and leaned against the top of the table, her feet slightly extended.

“Consider, Junot. Would the thought be possible to you, even though he wronged you most bitterly, to break a new path and, independent of him, begin a new life?”

“Laurette! It is folly for you to talk in this manner!” He faced her impatiently and stamped his foot on the floor. “If there is anyone who stands close to him, then it is I, and ‘independent of him’—what do you really mean? The one who wants to be independent of him must go to England, or across the ocean; for here, on the Continent”—he laughed bitterly but triumphantly—“no one is independent of him. What folly! I am a Frenchman, and he is my friend, whom I have voluntarily made my master—how could the thought ever occur to me to separate my life from his?”

“Voluntarily? Yes, perhaps, once! But now he is our master, and no will but his is free.”

Junot walked a few steps over the floor, and suddenly lifted his head and brushed the hair away from his forehead with a weary, impatient

The Governor's Wife

move of the hand, as though he wished to get rid of his own thoughts. Then he turned to Laurette, who still stood in the same position at the table.

"Did you notice, Laurette, that I danced to-night with—with—" He stopped, regretting that he had touched upon this subject.

"With Princess Caroline? Oh, yes, I saw it."

They were both silent. She was looking stubbornly down in front of her as Junot, stepping to her, took her around the waist with both hands and regarded her with an uncertain, bashful smile as he drew her toward him.

"Laurette," he whispered very softly, his face close to hers, "don't let that trouble you any longer; it is all over now!"

She shook her head. "And you believe that possible? No, my dear, a drama so carefully planned is not all over in one act!"

"I assure you, Laurette." He looked into her eyes, speaking a little louder.

"Tut, tut! Can you not understand what I mean? We are now compelled to take our parts in the play, whether we will or not! Can you not see that the Emperor, who is the manager of

The Governor's Wife

all the dramas here, has laid the second act in Bayonne, and third in . . . Ah, how do I know ? I cannot bear to think of it !”

“Dearest Laurette, you are listening too much to the court gossip,” he said, a little sharply. “You know very well that Napoleon has entirely different reasons for entrusting the Army of the Gironde to me.”

“Ah, yes, of course, I know that. He is a master when it comes to combinations. As he himself used to say, he really knows how to derive the greatest possible gains, even from mistakes.”

“Come,” and he led her to the big chair by the fireplace, while he knelt on a footstool before her and put his arms around her waist, “let me hear, before we part, everything that weighs upon your mind.”

She sighed. “The Observation Army at Gironde is called your division, is it not ? But the Emperor has other reasons, you say. Ah !” she passionately caressed him—“you may say what you will; I know that down there a danger awaits you—a greater danger than you have ever confronted before.”

“Do you fear for my life, Laurette ?” He

The Governor's Wife

looked up, almost surprised. "Who is it whom I have so often seen moved to tears over the bulletins from the Grand Army? Who was it who so often, in proud and spirited words, has called that one happy who was privileged to meet such an honorable and noble death? It was only two years ago that I had to hurry away from you at Lisbon to meet Napoleon in Mähren, but you were not afraid then."

"No, not then. I did not have time to become afraid then. Besides, you were Napoleon's First Adjutant—I knew that he would keep you near him. Now you are going to war for the second time since I have been your wife, and I now begin to realize what a different meaning this parting has for both of us."

"Realize the meaning! You cannot realize the meaning. But what difference does it make? The earth has tasted my blood so often in the past. . . . Well, if I have to die on the field, a year or two sooner or later . . ."

"Hush!" she exclaimed, despairingly. "My God, I never before understood what war means!"

"Is my life so precious to you—more precious than my honor, Laurette?"

The Governor's Wife

She was silent, with downcast eyes and lips tightly pressed together.

"Answer me! Remember, you are the wife of a French soldier," he said, solemnly.

She lifted her eyes, and, as she gently pushed him away from her, she looked at him with a glance that he never forgot.

"Your honor is more precious to me than anything in the world," she whispered, almost inaudibly. "Your name and responsibility—as soldier and chief . . ."

"My beloved! That is the courage I wish the woman to show who shares my life. And now—be of good cheer! The Emperor has been gracious to me again; he is my friend. I leave you behind to watch over our interests; and when we meet again, Laurette, perhaps I shall carry the marshal's staff!"

"Ah, that staff . . . I believe he could send you down into the abyss by simply waving it at you! He knew what he was doing when he did not give it to you before."

"Laurette! . . ."

"Don't I like Napoleon? Don't I admire him more than any one? And still . . . let me be allowed to say, once for all, that it is a sin—

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yes, a sin—the manner in which he has stimulated the ambitions of you all to this dizzy height. He urges you on like hounds after the prey.”

“But, Laurette, again you fail to realize what you are saying,” he said, tenderly.

Madame Junot rose silently, and for a few moments she walked impetuously to and fro. Suddenly she stopped and laid the backs of her hands against her burning cheeks, as if to cool them.

“Don’t look at me so ! It is usually you who are too impetuous. . . . Oh, you will be open and frank with me in your letters—I know well enough that just where there is danger, there the Emperor sends a man like you. But when the conditions become too bad down there—ah, I know Spain and Portugal !”—he made a gesture of surprise—“no, do not look so scared; no one has told me anything. I can readily guess that an army which gathers at Bayonne is to be used against the Peninsula. I don’t need to be told that the alliance between England and Portugal is the question of the hour, nor that the hour needs you—you, with your knowledge of Portugal and of the Portuguese. Don’t appear

The Governor's Wife

so astonished, Junot; I am gifted with second-sight whenever you are concerned. . . . I realize the terrific dangers ahead of you, and before you reach the worst of them I am coming to you. I can live in a bivouac, if I share it with you. Bah, these frills and furbelows !”

With a movement of contempt she stripped the bracelets from her arms and threw them rattling on the floor, adding :

“You think I am a slave to all this luxury? No more than Napoleon or you.”

“Laurette !” He took her in his arms. “You are making it doubly hard for me to leave you.”

“Possibly; but I demand no promises of you. I ask only this: that in the moment of danger, if you think of any woman, let your thought be of no one but me.”

He looked admiringly at her as he smiled proudly. How petty were all other women, even the most exalted, in comparison with her.

“I know a method by which I could win you completely. If I should make you live in eternal anxiety, and in constant fear of losing me, whom you now, with such absolute certainty, think you own . . . If I should arouse your jealousy . . . Ah, I could easily do it !” she

The Governor's Wife

added, defiantly, and spread her arms out. "I could easily do it—if I wished!"

Junot turned red at first, then deathly pale.

"So it is true?" he murmured in a choked voice. "So it is true—these insinuations that I hear at every turn—the gossip that whispers into my ears—that he . . . that the Emperor? . . ."

His wife did not answer. She simply shook her head, without looking at him. She was greatly excited; her cheeks burned, and her lovely bosom, fair as the purest marble, rose and fell with the tumult of her feelings, while she tightly grasped the arm of the chair with both hands and looked in front of her from under her knit brow. He walked slowly up to her and stood in front of her.

"Laurette, look at me! Will you let me leave you with this wound in my heart? Is it possible that he . . ."

"No; listen to me. I tell you that you suspect what is impossible," she said, harshly, and looked quickly up. "But, after all," she shrugged her shoulders scornfully—"of what importance is friendships among men when—"

He guessed her thought. "I have never been Murat's friend!" he said, hurriedly.

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She did not answer, a sad smile passing over her lips.

“Why have you heaped these burning coals upon my soul—now, this last evening?” exclaimed Junot. “I know that you have often had reasons for being displeased with me; but—ah, but this is an entirely different matter. A man’s wrong-doings can easily be forgiven—a woman’s never! If I thought that you . . . Laurette! I swear to you that not for an hour could I survive my dishonor and . . . and—my sorrow.”

She turned her head a little as she sat there leaning against the high back of her chair, and looked up at him with her large, dark eyes. Over the delicate bow of the stubbornly closed mouth there passed a proud smile.

“Junot, look straight at me! Look straight into my eyes! Do I look like a wife who intends to deceive her husband? *You* are unable to say ‘No’ to Napoleon; but you may rest assured that *I* can utter an emphatic ‘No’ should it become necessary. My mother could, too.”

He fell on his knees in front of her, forcibly caught both her arms, and buried his head in

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her lap. When he again lifted his head his eyes were full of tears.

“You are crying? You! Ah, Junot, I knew that you loved me, in spite of everything. In such matters one is seldom mistaken when one stands as near her husband as I do to you. But to see you shed tears for my sake . . .”

He smiled and laid her cool hands upon his moist eyes. He took her head between his hands and caressed her cheeks, her neck, and her shoulders. They looked at each other silently—tenderly. They saw each other clearly for the first time—a man and a woman—the only ones on earth.

“Laurette,” he whispered, softly, “you complained a few moments ago about life. Do you not feel how rich it is, how at this moment it is renewing itself?”

She placed her finger-tips upon his eyes and forced him to close them; she was blushing.

For a few minutes they sat close to each other in silence. Then she gently freed herself from his embrace, smilingly arose, and walked a few steps toward the door. She stopped suddenly, looked around with beaming eyes, and opened her arms.

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“Beloved Fontainebleau !” she whispered softly, as she bent her head back and closed her eyes. When she again looked up she met her husband’s glances.

“Beloved Fontainebleau, I shall never forget you. Here have I been happy !”

Three weeks later the Army of the Gironde crossed the Pyrenees, and the momentous war in the Peninsula had begun.

THE END

AUTHOR'S NOTES



THE writer has not called this book a "Romance," for it did not seem, after due consideration, to be well-formed and connected enough to deserve so dignified a description. These "pictures," which it has been her pleasure to draw during her idle hours, she has grouped about Madame Junot, the Governor's wife, and has given them the name of that brilliant and lovable personage.

As the material for these "pictures" has been gathered from Madame Junot's own "Memoirs," and has been treated from her point of view, the book has a right to carry her name. While the "Memoirs" have naturally been the special source of information, they are far from having been the only source. On the one hand, some episodes, such as Princess Pauline's visit,* the home-coming from Malmaison,† and the recep-

* Pages 57-62.

† Pages 82-84.

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tion of Princess Catherine at Raincy—these all follow Madame Junot's narrative very closely.

On the other hand, many of the chapters are pure fiction, built upon familiar incidents and developed along the line of motives that are historical. The writer, in following such a course, has committed many slight anachronisms, and in many cases drawn the knot of intrigue closer than the circumstances warranted; yet it is often a question in life as to what is fact and what fiction—as to the point at which imagination leaves off and the vulgar happening begins.

For a thorough understanding of the personal relations between General and Madame Junot, which forms naturally the groundwork of this presentation of their characters, the writer has been also greatly aided by their private correspondence, with which she has had an exceptional opportunity to make herself familiar through the kindness of their granddaughter, the Duchess of Abrantès.'

These letters, which are now faded and yellow with age, were written almost daily during fatiguing marches from country to country, in barracks, in the midst of siege, from many a battle-field. They are some of the most original

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and poetical documents of the times; for Junot possessed a chivalrous and poetical nature, which gave itself free and unconscious literary expression in these unrestrained letters to his wife. No one could fail to appreciate the strength and sincerity of the deep, true love which these two richly endowed people felt for each other, in spite of the difficulties inseparable from their position.

Her various studies have led the writer to an intimate knowledge of most of the famous French ladies of the days of Napoleon. With none of them has she felt the sympathy, and for none of them the affection by which she is drawn to Madame Junot, who is everywhere and always a "*femme maitresse*," as Napoleon called her mother. Hers was a brave, proud nature, and her manner was that of an aristocrat.

Madame Junot took the world but as the world, in a very matter-of-fact way, quite free from illusions—a thorough Gallic disposition which one never finds in young people outside of France, and even there but seldom. At the same time, however, she had a keen sensibility of perception, and a faculty for love and hatred which few people possess in so high a degree. Yet she

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was always loyal and faithful to the proud period to which she belonged by name and birth.

In the beautiful poem which Victor Hugo wrote to her, he said:

*Car j'ai ma mission! Car armé d'une lyre,
Plein d'hymnes irrités, ardents à s'épancher,
Je garde les trésors des gloires de l'Empire.
Je n'ai jamais souffert qu'on osât y toucher.*

His words applied as well to the lady to whom he sung as to himself. Junot's widow sits by day and night as a jealous watcher over the memories of the Empire. She never tires of pointing to the proud monuments which it raised for itself, and she ever defends and praises it. Even when the Emperor, embittered by his own misfortune, wounded her so deeply with his harsh criticism in his "Memoirs," she did not change her attitude in the least. She still exclaimed: "*Avec lui toutes les routes étaient bordées de lauriers, avec lui rien n'était amer!*"

Madame Junot's "Memoirs" are least satisfactory in the matter of historical correctness. She evidently had but little sense for dates, and very little for arrangement; she mixes carelessly happenings and epochs, and sometimes even names; her statements should always be compared

Author's Notes

with those of other authorities. She herself admits that she was never in the habit of rereading what she had written. And still, how trustworthy are these "Memoirs," how true their sentiment and feeling! Few have to such a degree as she understood how to paint in words their times and the people of their times. Her description, for instance, of Bonaparte as youth and young man is exceptionally fine. Bourriennes' description of Napoleon at the same time is neither so lifelike nor rich.

Madame Junot's description of Napoleon has often been compared with Madame de Rémusat's. But careful investigation has shown that Madame de Rémusat was not worthy of the absolute confidence which many authors—among them even Taine—have had in her.

The thousands of pages which Madame Junot, in her careless, nonchalant manner, has written about the time of the Directorate, the Consulate, the Empire, and the Restoration scarcely form a "book;" they are, rather, a collection of sketches and dialogues—sometimes fact and sometimes fiction. There are dry, disconnected notes, piquant anecdotes, satirical sallies, pathetic outpourings of her heart, and passionate

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accusations and confessions—all stored away with aristocratic carelessness and confusion in this great portfolio. But in this portfolio, rich in material, all must study and search who are interested in the France of the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. Of the thousands of sheets into which she has broken the mirror of her time you will find in each piece a picture of a rare woman—Madame Junot herself.

“Often an eagle, always an angel,” says Victor Hugo of Laura Junot. Not always! She was simply one of the best-poised and sanest women of the Empire, and as such she will ever appear in the flickering light of time. If we cannot always, with Victor Hugo, detect “her noble wings,” at any rate we know that she always had her little feet firmly placed on the ground. Neither in ecstasy nor in the bitterness of sorrow and despair did her clear spirit ever lose its balance, and often she let her noble wings fall with a Parisian shrug of her shoulders.

If any one thinks that, in the intrigue of this book, there is laid too much weight on *gloire* and *carrière*, let them turn to the history of France in 1807. That was the proud year of power, honor,

Author's Notes

and triumph; and that was the time of the "secret articles" of the Peace of Tilsit, which were dictated by a semigod, and were accepted by an autocratic enthusiast. Every event was written with the heart-blood of the French nation.

At that period politics were a romance, exciting beyond all others, and there was neither dreamed nor lived a romance which did not begin and end in politics. For, as Thiers somewhere says about him who was the all-powerful master and dictator of the times: "*On faisait alors la politique avec ses passions!*"

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